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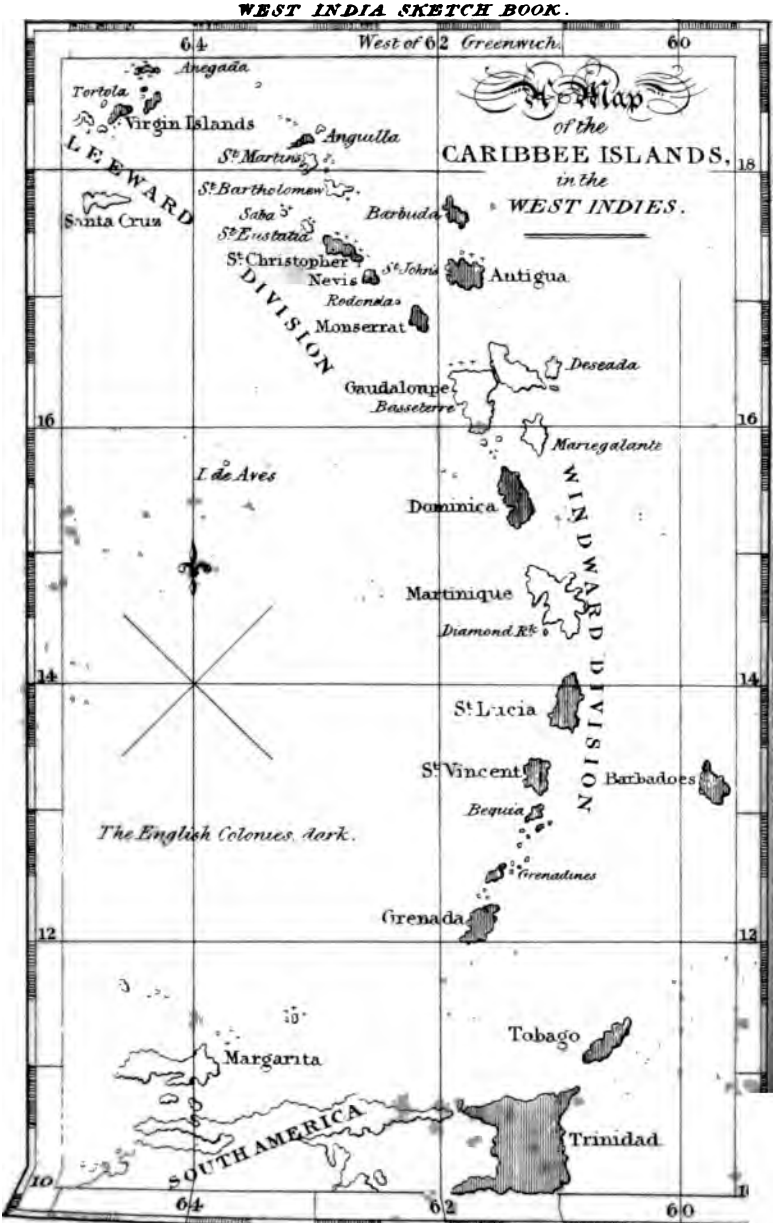
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THE

WEST INDIA

SKETCH BOOK.

SECOND EDITION,

WITH ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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INTRODUCTION.

> "What's in a name?—that which we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet"—

So says Juliet;

> "Name's nothing, merit's all, rhubarb's rhubarb, call it what you will"—

So says Ollapod.

THERE is no reasoning upon opinion when *love* and *medicine* are concerned, so we will not dispute the very natural conclusion of the fair inamorata, and the renowned medico-military functionary, so far as relates to roses and rhubarb;—but certainly, in other matters, evidence is not wanted

to establish a conviction, that a name, or, which is the same thing, a *title*, hath a marvellous influence upon what is termed the weak side of human nature. "There is in souls a sympathy with sounds," as well as with shadows, which constitute a large portion of human felicity. So sensible, indeed, was Dr. Johnson, that the success of a literary work depended greatly upon the judicious selection of a persuasive cognomen, that he confessed to have tortured his prolific brain for a whole night, as he lay floundering in his bed like a stranded porpoise, before he could fix upon an appropriate designation to those exquisite morsels of morality which appeared under the name of "the Rambler."

Certainly we have not been so felicitous in the selection of a title to the work before us. The name of the West Indies has become so inevitably associated with ideas of misery and suffering, the public palate has, for so long a period, been nauseated by its frequent repetition, and "Sketch-Books" have become so familiar to the reading world, as vehicles for empirical compounds in literary quackery, that

our own *label* may naturally excite suspicion at first sight, provoke a revulsion in the economy of the mind, and cause rejection of the *preparation*, upon the conviction that the ingredients are pernicious, that they consist of a narcotical recapitulation, "to be taken as before," of alleged atrocities, or refuted calumnies, with which the public mind has been amused and abused for the last quarter of a century; instead of—what?—taste, good reader, taste. Yes, had we sooner reflected upon the importance of a title to insure the sale of a work, we should have adopted that of "Pickles and Preserves from the West Indies, in two packages"—rather than the "West India Sketch Book, in two volumes"—but the thing is done, we never gave the matter a moment's consideration.

It is manifest, therefore, at least to ourselves, that we appear before the public under every disadvantage, and not less so, because—owing to the delay in the execution of the engravings, and to one of those "natural shocks, that flesh is heir to"—two works, bearing some affinity to it, have appeared since the "West India Sketch-Book"

went to press[1]. But it may be asked, "why publish at all?"

——————————" there are no rewards
Of fame or profit when the world grows weary"—
I ask in turn—"Why do you play at cards?
Why drink?—why read?"—"To make some hours less dreary,
It occupies me to turn back regards
On what I've seen, or ponder'd, sad or cheery;
And what I write I cast upon the stream
To swim or sink—I have had at least my dream!"

[1] Mrs. Carmichael's Domestic Manners, &c. in the West Indies, and the Journal of a West India Proprietor.

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The attention of the Binder *is directed* to those marked thus *

ERRATA.

Page 28, line 2, for *debarkation* read *embarkation*.
— 45, — 9, for *either* read *each*.
— 81, — 4, for *casrce* read *scarce*.
— 105, — 7, for *were* read *was*.
— 125, — 11, for *run* read *ran*.
— 143, — 6, for *either* read *each*.
— 148, — 5, for *limois Rana coax at* read *limosis Rana coaxat*, &c.
— — — 13, for *have* read *has*.
— — — 14, for *their* read *its*.
— 196, — 6, for *either* read *each*.

THE

WEST INDIA

SKETCH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

A RETROSPECT—EARLY IMPRESSIONS AND POPULAR PREJUDICES—OCCIDENTAL ANOMALIES—HERALDIC DISTINCTIONS—LEAVE-TAKING.

"I'll read you matter deep and dangerous;
As full of peril, and advent'rous spirit,
As to o'erwalk a current, roaring loud,
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear."

First Part of Henry IV.

A PERIOD of twelve years has elapsed since I underwent the ordeal of being packed up for a voyage. I may say, I speak literally, and I shall no doubt be understood by those of my readers who in the course of their lives have been compelled by necessity, or induced by inclination, suddenly to dispense

with *artificial* comforts, and to reduce those of a necessary nature within the compass of a portmanteau and carpet bag: such a dispensation, in whatever station in life a man may move, is to take from him part of himself, to leave him like an empty bottle, with the spirit and purpose of its existence evaporated; or like a clock, with all the outward and visible forms of utility, but destitute of a spring or a pendulum to keep it going. Various, indeed, are the causes which might place a man in such a predicament, independent of *voyaging;* an inadvertent act of bankruptcy for instance, which on some occasions mercifully leaves him in possession of *all* he can wear about his person, and an unexpected commission *de lunatico inquirendo*, issued at the instigation of a *friend*, for the purpose of *making* him mad, have been known, in numerous instances, to dismember many an unfortunate being from the chain which links society together, and to close against him the avenues of the "social compact." On the occasion to which I am now referring, I had thus become a sort of *parenthesis* in the creation; a thing that might be left out without being missed, and by an act of my own, I had passed

upon myself sentence of transportation beyond the seas. In this, as I have ever since thought, I was influenced more by my stars than by the ostensible motive of business; independent of a vagabondizing disposition, acquired early in life, which had often taken me from the paths of profit and preferment into a wilderness of pleasure and enjoyment: in short—

> "I love a devious path that winds askance,
> And hate to keep one object still in view,
> The flow'rs are fragrant that we find by chance;
> And both in nature, and in life, I'd rather
> Have those I meet, than those I come to gather."

It is true that the evils as well as the benefits of life are materially dependent upon comparison for their degrees of oppugnancy one to another, and that they are not only constantly varying their relative importance as often as fresh causes demand our approbation or dislike, but the same or corresponding circumstances produce in one and the same person different sensations at different times.—At the period in question I was most unaccountably influenced by feelings which I had never before felt, although often placed precisely in the same situation. Being of a nervous temperament, and

sensibly affected by the changes of this precarious climate, I was, for the space of three weeks before I embarked, in the "cut-throat month" of November, perambulating the streets of London with my pulse in my hand. I was literally in a state of constitutional mildew—a walking thermometer, whose mercury fluctuated at every new thought or abrupt question. I was one minute so irritable, and the next so passive, that I could have knocked a man down, and have forgiven him before he had time to return me the compliment: I remember, on one occasion, I was on the point of trying the experiment upon an unfortunate tailor for bringing me a pair of ill-shaped trousers, when I discovered, through his timely interposition, that I had put them on with the hinder part in front. It was some time before I could clearly comprehend the cause of this physical and mental commotion, which increased as the period of embarkation approached. I felt, at times, as if I had two souls billetted within me, and that they were uneasy for want of better accommodation; every movement suggested the idea that my joints required oiling, to give them their accustomed elasticity, and at

length I began seriously to adopt the theory of the materialists, by imagining that each distinct member of my body had at least the power of *thinking* for itself, and was at cross-purposes with its appointed coadjutor. In short, if I can imagine the sensations of a person going to be hanged, or to submit to any other similar experiment upon his *nervous* system, those I was doomed to endure were of a corresponding character, and whatever outward signs of indifference I may have shown, they were merely those of a culprit who was determined to "die game!"

It may, in reason, be asked, what all this perturbation of mind and contortion of body have to do with the subject, or rather subjects, professedly the contents of this volume? Still, my dear reader, thou would'st be at fault by the inquiry: if my exordium be long, I have cogent reasons for it; I wish, in the first place, to show my regard for thee by making it a beacon for thy guidance, should'st thou ever be cast adrift in the same sea of trouble—

"Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum."

Secondly, to prove to thee, in honour of thy companionship, that I am not so great a coward as thou might in reason take me to be, and that my valour, on the occasion in question, although of a negative character, inasmuch as it had well nigh allowed my cowardice to overcome my purpose, was superior to that of the man, whose tombstone announced to the world that "he never knew fear." I believe it was Charles the Vth. who was so much struck with the singularity of the man's epitaph, and who quaintly observed, that he never could have "snuffed a candle with his fingers:"—now I *have* snuffed a candle with my fingers! I had moreover, at the time to which I am referring, made voyages—I had swung in a hammock—experienced sea-sickness—had my olfactories disturbed by bilge water—and revelled in all the numerous *et cæteras* peculiar to a sea-life; but for all this, I felt an indescribable dread of the present undertaking, and the different sensations I have endeavoured to describe, arose less from the probability that the chances of my ever returning were against me, in proportion to the frequency of adventure, or from

those associations which naturally exist in a man's mind when he is about to sever—

> "The flow'ry chains that bind the heart to home!"

than from the ominous conviction that I was going to the WEST INDIES!!! Here was the rub, what an exuberance of associations sprung up before me: plague, pestilence, and famine stared me in the face. I was already light-headed with a *stroke of the sun*, or chilled to the extremities by *night air*. Fever and "black-vomits" were familiar to me in my dreams, and engrossed my waking thoughts—the nursery tales of my youth, and all I had since heard of kidnapping blacks to make sugar, and scourging them with cart-whips for pastime, were forcibly brought to my recollection; and the every day reiterated instances of cruelty practised by our West Indian *white* brethren, on our helpless and degraded *black* brethren, gave the stamp of truth to the speculations in which I had been led to indulge. I had long since been taught to dislike sugar, by the conviction on my mind, that it was the produce of certain "pains and penalties" inflicted without

mercy on the unfortunate negro, and that the small lumps occasionally found in the genuine *Muscovado*, were caused, in the course of manufacture, by drops of blood from his jaded and lacerated limbs. So constantly, indeed, does the mind revert to first impressions, that a long course of practical experience is required to wear down the forms which prejudice or popular belief may have established upon it. I was resolved, however, to gain all the information possible, respecting the "New World" I was about to visit, and I consequently devoted two or three mornings to research at an anti-slavery emporium in Piccadilly—to ransacking the dusty shelves of numerous book-stalls; and in the course of a week I had summed up, upon the principle of Franklin's moral algebra, a very formidable account, which exhibited an alarming balance against the Western Indies, and its party-coloured inhabitants. Here, then, I found myself consigned to a country which, in the language of my informants, was nothing less than a "*sweating chaos*," the "dung-hill of the universe"—the refuse of the whole creation—a shapeless pile of rubbish, with the clippings of the elements

confusedly jumbled together, neglected by Omnipotence when the world was formed into its admirable order, the nursery of Heaven's judgments, where the malignant seeds of pestilence were first gathered and scattered through the regions of the earth, to punish mankind for their offences;—the place where Pandora filled her box—where Vulcan forged Jove's thunderbolts—and that Phaeton, by his rash misguidance of the sun, scorched into a cinder—the birth-place of tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, and plague—the receptacle of vagabonds driven from the pale of civilized society—the sanctuary of bankrupts;—in fine, whose whole inhabitants, male and female, bore in their appearance the very escutcheon of the country—their complexion being the *field* bearing *or*, charged with all the emblems of destruction, *proper;* supported by two *devils sable;* and *Death* the crest, *argent.*

Let me appeal to the benevolent sympathies of any man, if this was not enough to "try one's muscle?"—but I resolved upon consulting more recondite and modern authority to establish truth, and to satisfy the craving solicitude of my mind, and I purchased (at 20 per cent. discount at least,)

abundant evidence in the form of pamphlets and tracts, that I was certainly not going to a land flowing with milk and honey, but rather to a place which might be considered the very *Sodom* of the universe, whose people were upon a par with the "savages of the Andamans, celebrated for eating up all new comers, and for the insatiable voraciousness of their appetites," as well as for hate, and stratagems among themselves,—*Vivitur ex rapto* :—to a country, although an integral portion of the British dominions, where "the native intelligence and buoyant independence of Britons cannot survive in the dank and baleful climate of personal slavery[1]," where upwards of "800,000" souls are kept down in a state of heathenish irreligion, and almost brutal degradation, and where all those established principles, which Divine Providence has ordained for the moral benefit of mankind, have been contemned and nullified. "*Omnes homines notionem Deorum habent*," &c. :—and master Aristotle was a heathen.

It is no marvel, therefore, that the main-spring of my purpose should have given way under such

[1] Vide Wilberforce's Appeal, p. 73.

a load of degradation opposed to it, and that I should have delayed my embarkation, during the prevalence of unfavourable wind, until I had every fair chance of being left behind, as an excuse for not proceeding. It was, however, otherwise designed. At a luckless moment I took a plunge into a *soirée*, by way of weaning back my affections to civilized life, expecting applause among my friends for my recantation, and congratulation upon the narrow escape of my valuable existence; in lieu of which, I unfortunately encountered expressions of surprise, that I had not already departed, and I was as fairly voted out of the country against my inclination, as ever man acquired the *brevet* rank of husband, by being talked into marrying the girl he cared nothing about. Sentence was passed, and I had no time left me for reflection; within a few hours after, when I had scarce accommodated myself to a sofa and two chairs for a dormitory, I was required to "show a leg" to a raw morning, and undergo the torture of shaving with a blunt razor and cold water,—a misery quite equivalent to having a tooth drawn by *instalments*, and to jump into

a post-chaise, in order to overtake my wardrobe, already proceeding on its voyage. A sudden change in the wind occasioned this abrupt procedure.

Fashion, which governs feeling and reconciles us to most things, would do well to dispense with the pleasurable pain—or painful pleasure, of leave-taking—of adieus and farewells: it is true they afford abundant materials for very pretty *poetic* imaginings; but as a mere *proser* myself, I consider them at best but supervacaneous, and better left alone: moreover, I am satisfied that, with the exception of a *select* few, your friends do not thank you in their hearts, for drawing upon them, at sight, for all the civil things which the occasion demands, and the penalty may always be saved to them, by preparing them for it beforehand, with a visit "*sans adieu*"—the first plunge may be desperate, but it is soon over, and you may afterwards enjoy the privilege it affords of writing to those who have any claim to your affections or your regard, and of saying ten thousand tender agreeables, which your modesty would never have allowed you to utter, or which,

in the hurry of departure, would never have been listened to;—think of this, dear reader, should'st thou take to travelling. In this instance, necessity—and a weathercock, which gave me the hint,—left *me* no choice.

CHAPTER II.

A SHORT COGITATION—DOZING PHANTASIES—GRAVESEND—LAND SHARKS—DEAL—A PROFESSIONAL ADVISER—HINTS TO VOYAGERS.

"In life, as in our voyages, there seems
One mighty moment when the truth comes o'er us:
In life, 'tis when the sweet home shelter'd dreams
Of youth subside, and the world stands before us,
The great bold, busy world, with all its schemes:—
At sea, 'tis when we leave the wave that bore us
All gently near the shore with tranquil motion,
And feel the vast and undeniable ocean."

The Brunswick.

In every engagement, whether of profit or of pleasure, a man naturally calculates the chances of success; and his ardour is increased, or his indifference is excited, in proportion to the novelty of the undertaking, the frequency of adventure, the benefits he may contemplate, or the risks he may

be likely to incur. In the buoyancy of youth this speculative genius is less ardent: the hasty impulses of enterprise are unrestrained by the sober suggestions of reason, which in later life neutralize the passions: he is led away into the regions of fancy to contemplate objects beyond his reach, and to indulge in hopes which are never to be realized. The all-confiding sympathies of home are, for awhile, forgotten, or thought of with indifference, whilst the inordinate demands of his curiosity, or of his ambition, engross all the energies of his mind, and he launches forth into the busy world, regardless of the dangers that may await him, and of the real benefits he may be relinquishing. The severe and varied trials of his youth too soon, however, obscure this morning sunshine of the bosom, blight the harvest of his hopes; and the practical knowledge experience teaches, opens a new era in his existence, as he becomes unconsciously influenced by established truths upon his mind, exciting at once feelings hitherto unknown to him, and producing a principle of action, for which he has no direct means of accounting. A love of life, which is said

generally to increase as the tenure of it draws to a close, and a certain affection for the good things the world is capable of dispensing, may have something to do with this change in his constitution :—

> " The tree of deepest root is found
> Least willing still to quit the ground,
> 'Twas therefore said by ancient sages,
> That love of life increas'd with years
> So much, that in our later stages,
> When pains grow sharp, and sickness rages,
> The greatest love of life appears."

The soldier after repeated trials becomes no longer ambitious of accumulating fresh laurels, or the sailor of adding one achievement more to his country's renown, whilst the statesman, once tenacious of the nation's weal, is satisfied

> " ———through the loop-holes of his retreat,
> To peep at such a world, and not feel the crowd."

Men who have faced death a thousand times as matter of business, who have long played the game of hazardous enterprise, become unwilling to stake their life " *on the nick*," when the chances are so much against them; and although

it was not my lot, at this particular period, to be treading on the heels of a *climacterick* in personal adventure, a foretaste, through the experience of others, and a tolerable share of the "ups and downs" of life, were sufficient to mark out a "forlorn hope" in the undertaking I was now embarked in. I marvel not, therefore, that the workings of my imagination, in that mental *hot-bed*, a post-chaise, should have presented to me whimsical associations in speculating upon the issue; such is the case with every man about to visit regions as yet known to him only through the medium of distorted narration; he scarce ventures to close his eyes without having a chaotic variety of images before him, representing an identity of what he may have read or heard, albeit, never so much unlike the reality; constantly assuming fresh shapes, the most agreeable are in succession adopted to suit the impression left on the mind, till the imagination becomes a sort of *kaleidoscope*, exhibiting various and manifold figures of no tangible or permanent character; and if sleep overtake him in his meditations, it is pretty certain he becomes personally identified with all the fantastic shapes

and vagaries which rise up before him. He is on the spot, however distant it may be, perhaps sweltering under a tropical sun, although in reality shaking with the ague, with a window open at his back, or for want of an extra blanket; he imagines himself flying, or falling from the clouds, instead of dozing in his arm-chair, or being snugly tucked up in a feather bed; in short, to be any thing and any where, but what and where he really is. My spiritual and bodily man were coiled up cozily together on the seat of the chaise, lulled into an elysium of this sort by the grinding of the chariot wheels over a gravelly road, and the pelting of the rain on the coach-top, predisposed by the fatigues and late hours of the preceding night, and a certain portion of anti-slavery information I had infused into me during the first stage from London: I imagined myself reposing on a delicious bed, the materials of which were of the finest and softest texture,—damask and satin were common in comparison, but "a change came o'er the spirit of my dream," and I discovered, with amazement, that I was luxuriating on a surface of exquisite *onion-sauce*, over a *substratum* of live rabbits: I was

hence transported to a vapour bath, with every pore of my skin acting as a *jet d'eau:* the heat was excessive and intolerable, yet was I laughing in extacies at the absurdities before me:—on all sides "a pepper and salt" population of blacks and whites appeared breathing an atmosphere above boiling heat, whilst innumerable imps like *tadpoles*, were bubbling on the surface. One little urchin more busy than the rest, who had buzzed about me with an ingratiating look, now introduced immediately under me, a sort of camp-kettle with blazing coals in it; whilst another, whom I had observed in the character of a grave-digger, was resting from his labour on the handle of a spade, and pointing to the excavation he had just completed, with the friendly notice above it in letters of blood—"Beware of *man-traps!*" Every thing before me was in motion, flitting and evanescent, and I could recognize nothing possessing for a moment a tangible form; I was now suddenly attacked by a legion of little devilkins no bigger than bats, and which I fancied I could brush away with a wave of my hand, but their number and their concentrated efforts perplexed me. I was tossed about like a

foot-ball; a select few more active than the rest following me in every direction, with such tenacity of purpose, as to keep up a continual buzzing in my ears, throwing dust in my eyes, and performing with one foot a sort of *pirouette* on the tip of my nose. Having succeeded in raising me, by degrees to a considerable height, they left me with one simultaneous and, apparently, preconcerted movement, and I found myself falling into the identical excavation which had been so diligently opened by my little friend with the spade; the horror I felt at this moment is indescribable! What I had recognised as a snug little *West Indian freehold* of six feet by two, suddenly became larger and larger, as I approached it, as if I had in the first instance viewed it through an immeasurable distance, and it at length assumed the appearance of a boundless and bottomless pit, presenting an interminable journey before me: I found myself kicking, screaming, and turning somersets—my breath was going—I was in my last gasp—my senses were gone—when I was mercifully relieved from the painful delusion, by the joint efforts of the wind "visiting my face too roughly," and a

jostle from the post-boy, who had just opened the chaise-door, to acquaint me with my arrival at *Gravesend!!* The announcement was *ominous!* but the ship had departed on her way to the Downs, and the respite relieved me.

I might advance a similar reason for not being better able to satisfy my reader with an account of the good town of *Gravesend*, to that assigned by Dennis Brulgruddery in the play, for not being more intimately acquainted with a bailiff,—he might have seen one, once or twice in his life, but he "was always in too great hurry to look behind him," and with all due respect to the said township, notwithstanding that its privileges and its *garden-stuff* have been on the decline since the days of Queen Bess and the Spanish Armada, I have never entered it without using all possible expedition to accomplish my departure[1].—Thus much I may say for it: independent of the high reputation it

[1] The Lord Mayor of London and the Aldermen were wont to receive foreign ambassadors and eminent strangers at this place, and attend them to the metropolis. It was also famous for vast quantities of vegetables grown in the neighbourhood, which were considered of the finest description, and were sent to London, and to parts adjacent.

may have acquired in the olden time, that previous to the passing of the Reform Bill, it was considered the boundary, in one direction, as the land's-*end*, in Cornwall, is in the other, of a line of coast peculiarly the province of a species of *land-sharks*, with their attendant *pilots*, more generally known under the name of *boatmen*. Further, I have been credibly informed, that tame rabbits are reared and fatted into Christmas condition somewhere in the neighbourhood,—that its asparagus was at one time considered superior to that grown at Battersea, and that periwinkles may still be had there in great perfection.

* * * * *

There is nothing in literary composition more agreeably tormenting to a reader than a string of *asterisks*—they are extremely pretty in themselves, but they owe their importance chiefly to the indication they convey that something is omitted in the text that cannot, or should not appear, either through the illegibility of the manuscript, the caprice of the author, or the refined delicacy of the publisher; and the reader's imagination is left to vegetate accordingly, and to fill up the *hiatus*, *ad*

libitum.—For myself I am not secular in such matters, and I hope to be excused for introducing, on the present occasion, those literary planets, for no other purpose than to represent to the reader the several towns and villages, of *Rochester*, *Chatham*, *Sittingbourne*, *Milton*, and *Canterbury*, through which I passed, during the night, in my progress to *Deal.*

On my arrival at the last-named place, I could gain no information of my ship, and having lodged myself at the "*Three Kings*," in a room with a long gallery overlooking the sea, I resolved patiently to wait her appearance, or in default thereof, to reconcile myself to the voyage to the West Indies I had made in my imagination, whence I might consider myself returning on my way to London. I was not long without an adviser in my dilemma, but he was one of those advisers by *profession*, who calculate with the greatest nicety upon the quantum of benefit that must accrue to themselves from the results contemplated, and who occasionally carry their disinterestedness so far, as to admit one as a "*sleeping* partner" in the conduct of one's own affairs. He was one of the numerous specimens of rough-spun humanity peculiar to the sea-coast, and

according to his own confession, coming under the order of the aforesaid amphibious animals, yclept "land sharks," inasmuch as he had been born and bred at, and as he himself emphatically announced by way of recommendation, *belonged* to Deal, the nursery of the species. He was clad in a tarpaulin round jacket of the most inflexible texture, with a hat of the same materials, shaped somewhat like a coal-heaver's, which he called a "south-wester," and a pair of thick shaggy trousers, like unto the skin of a Greenland bear, with the ends of the legs turned up sufficiently to exhibit a pair of long-legged boots of extra thickness, which had recently received a liberal coating of an anti-aquæous compound. This worthy disciple of Neptune had no sooner entered, and accomplished the necessary exordium—"Good morning," than he commenced perambulating the room in true quarter-deck style, with a long spy-glass in his hand, with which he occasionally repaired to the gallery to scan the horizon; and, apparently, taking upon himself the prescriptive right of laying an embargo upon the attention of all non-residents and novices until he had at least satisfied himself that he could not levy

an impost upon their actions or inclinations. I soon ascertained that he was one of those important personages who take great delight in hearing themselves talk, and imagine that they do so without failing to edify and enlighten their hearers—but as taciturnity on my part was the natural consequence of fatigue, and incidental to my engagement at the breakfast table, independent of inclination and habit, he at length became reconciled to monologue in the absence of dialogue, and I gained, perhaps, more information by my reserve than I should have acquired by interrogation. I had already ascertained by ocular demonstration, and with a singular *punch-like* compound feeling of surprise, mortification, and pleasure, that every vessel in the Downs had left the anchorage with the new wind, except a solitary man-of-war guard-ship, or floating police station for the suppression of smugglers. It was, therefore, with composure bordering on indifference that I regarded the supplementary information I derived from my companion's soliloquy, that upwards of three hundred sail of shipping had only a few hours before occupied the wide expanse of water before me. "We had," said he, "somewhere about three

hundred on 'em at anchor here yesterday, with a sneezing south-wester blowing in their teeth, and now we hav'nt a stick to hang a rag on, except the King's lurcher there:—howsomever, it's a ill wind as blows nobody no good:"—a hitch of the waistband of his trousers, and an accommodating visit of the back of his hand to his weather-beaten nose, followed this singular epiphonema, and I was again left, for a few moments, cogitating, with a triangular piece of muffin in my hand, on the world of incident he had opened to my imagination.

* * * * *

Reader, lend me your ears! and register on the tablet of thy memory the hints I shall now give to thee; they may serve thee on a future occasion, peradventure you meditate a trans-Atlantic trip, and have especial regard to thy comforts. Let me then premise, that there are three particular means of conveyance, (the fourth, which consists of Mr. Webb's machines for walking on the water, not having come into general use.) A fine frigate is by no means objectionable, and should'st thou happen to be related to, or connected with, one of the Lords Commissioners, or the Secretary of the Ad-

miralty, such a vessel may possibly be found travelling in thy route, and I recommend the selection. From the port of Falmouth, Post-office packets sail twice in every month, in which thou may'st calculate upon dispatch, and the avoidance of River and Channel navigation, but *per contra*, thou hast 265 miles land carriage from London to get on board, and thy accommodation would not prove quite so commodious as may be on board a "well-found," well-fitted, respectable class of merchantman [1]. Failing, then, in the first, it is to the latter

[1] These packets are now under the control of the Lords of the Admiralty. They are mostly brigs of war, commanded by lieutenants or masters in the navy, and are appointed to sail from Falmouth as soon as the mails arrive, which are made up in London the *first* and *third* Thursday in every month.

The following are the present rates of passages to the several Islands, and from the West Indies to Falmouth.

	Cabin.			Steerage.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
From Falmouth to Barbados, Saint Vincent, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Martinique, or Saint Domingo	43	0	0	22	0	0
to Dominica or Guadaloupe	44	0	0	23	0	0
to Antigua or Montserrat.....	46	0	0	25	0	0
to Nevis or Saint Kitt's	47	0	0	26	0	0
to Tortola, Saint Thomas, or Jamaica	48	0	0	27	0	0
to Carthagena, or Honduras	55	0	0	30	0	0
to Vera Cruz or Tampico	60	0	0	32	0	0

From

I would direct thy attention, and should London be the point of thy debarkation, repair to Lloyd's Coffee House, at the Exchange, where thou wilt find notices of vessels of various tonnage and seaworthiness from A 1 to E 1, arranged together according to the ports or places whither they are bound. Ascertain with *caution*, that the ship of thy selection be a regular or constant trader to the place to which thou purpose proceeding, and especially avoid embarking in a *new* ship, or with a captain that *carries his wife with him!* By attention to the first thou wilt be more prompt in thy departure, and thou may'st secure to thyself such a gaoler, as may reconcile thee to thy voluntary

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
From Saint Thomas to Falmouth	50	0	0	28	0	0
Jamaica or Havannah to Falmouth	60	0	0	32	0	0
Carthagena to Falmouth.....	66	0	0	35	0	0
Vera Cruz to Falmouth	70	0	0	38	0	0

Female servants to pay two-thirds of the cabin passage-money, male servants as steerage passengers, children under three years of age to go free, under nine years of age to pay as steerage passengers, and above nine as cabin passengers.

Each passenger is allowed to carry any weight of linen, wearing apparel, and books, not exceeding 400lbs. Passengers not proceeding after taking their passage, forfeit half the passage money.

Bedding to be found by the passengers.

No carriages are allowed to be carried.

imprisonment, inasmuch as he may have a reputation to lose for civility and attention to his passengers, at the place of trading, if he have not a natural disposition to guide him in his duty—whereas, on the other hand, thou might probably embark in a *chance* ship, engaged for *one* voyage to, or making "a call" at the place of thy destination, with a *skipper* who would regulate thy accommodation and thy comfort entirely by his own convenience and interest, and the chances in his favour that he may never see thee, or hear of thee again. In a *new* ship, one that has never been to sea, thou wilt assuredly be annoyed with caulking, tarring, painting, nailing cleats, fitting sails, setting up rigging, leaks in the decks, creaking of her timbers, and a train of disagreeable varieties to disturb the equanimity of thy temper for the voyage—or perchance discover a trenail-hole in the nether part of her hull to amuse thee at the pumps until a port be found in which to shelter thee from sinking—and with the skipper's wife on board, in sober verity we say it! the chances are in favour of the ship "*missing her stays*" in tacking, or getting upset in a *squall*. Believe me, ladies, without dis-

paragement of your manifold attributes, the sea is not your element!—the scarcity of *mermaids* proves that nature never designed that it should be, and nothing short of a matrimonial speculation to Calcutta, or a compulsory voyage to Port Jackson, ought to excuse your appearance on shipboard. Far less excusable is the presence of the captain's wife, for if he love his ship with the ardent affection of a genuine skipper, who by the bye, ought to adhere to a state of celibacy, jealousy must inevitably ensue,—he cannot fairly divide his attention and his affections between the two loveliest *feminine* productions of nature and art.

Having, therefore, made thy selection of a ship, take *apodictical* evidence of her worthiness before thou finally engage thy berth. Repair on board, and if thou lov'st pure water, give thine eye to a *dripstone:* if there be not one on board, enter a caveat at once against the bad taste of the captain, and prepare thyself for a lack of other indispensables—remember shops are not open in the Atlantic.

Select thy sleeping berth on the *larboard*, or left-hand side; it is more frequently the *weather*

side, in sailing to the southward, and, consequently, higher above the surface, whence thou wilt either avoid, or hear less distinctly, the rippling and splashing noise of the water outside, and thou wilt be less likely to be annoyed with drops of water, which occasionally come through small leaks in the deck: the sensation, too, of being on the "*weather* side," or to *windward*, is, *in all cases*, more agreeable!

Avoid, if thou can'st, embarking in the River, unless as a *novelty* in thy account with experience; make it a *sine quâ non* in thy agreement with the captain, that he "take you up" at Deal, or Portsmouth; and if, perchance, thou meet'st with a co-passenger, "*dovetail*" thy arrangements in with his, and make thy journey to the coast together—economy and comfort suggest it. Even thus, most *patient* reader, I would do with thee, and with all my heart, I wish I could do honour to thy baptism, by greeting thee, in good fellowship, with thy true Christian cognomen; not that I am unmindful of the old adage, on the score of familiarity; but it is meet, if we travel further together, that we should *macadamize* the route, and *Siamese*

our affections, in order to render the journey as pleasant as possible:—

"Comes jucundus in via pro vehiculo est."

I have provided thee with such a ship as I have spoken of; thou hast escaped the wear and tear of river navigation, by far the most disagreeable part of the voyage; all the numerous *parentheses* of pilots' whims and turning tides, Custom-house cockets and clearances; and especially, much of that compound effluvia peculiar to a ship before she has been well aired by the sea breezes. I have, only then, to ask thee, wilt thou proceed? Thou art secure against sea-sickness, although, perchance I may introduce thee to a storm or two; thou may'st traverse six thousand miles and upwards of pure Atlantic, visit the Pandemonium I have presented to thee in perspective, without being *singed* or *scorched*, enjoy a genuine tropical *walking*-bath, and return safe to thy arm-chair, and enjoy thy beef-steak and rheumatism after the true English fashion—*Vamos!*

CHAPTER III.

A COLLOQUY—DEAL BOATMEN—A DILEMMA—THE VENUS—POETICAL INVOCATION—CAPTAIN DOVE—SKIPPERS AND CAPTAINS—PASSENGERS.

> "I nunc et ventis animam committe, doloso
> Confisus ligno; digitis à morte remotus
> Quatuor, aut septem; si sit latissima tæda."
>
> *Juvenal.*

"TEN pounds for putting us the distance of as many furlongs? Why, my good fellow, about treble the amount would pay our passage to the *antipodes!*"

"That may be—but you must get o'board your bark, I take it, afore you commence your voyage; and we are willing to put you there; that is, if you pay us for our labour; and little enough we ask, a'tween a score or two on us."

"How so, you surely do not require a ship's company to man your cutter?"

"Why, not exactly; but we require a ship's crew

to man that little fleet of boats on the beach, and a staunch crew too, none of your *swabbers* and *afterguard*, able seamen every inch on 'em, that have faced all weathers without wincing, and have often looked '*Davy Jones*' in the face, in saving many a land-lubber from his locker—aye, and without getting a blessing for't."

Such was the colloquy between ourselves and our attendant *Triton*, who had no sooner ascertained that our "*Venus*" was approaching, and that it was our purpose to embark in her, than he placed us, *nolens volens*, under his surveillance, and without allowing us time for expostulation, our luggage was conveyed to the beach for embarkation, by a crew of eight sturdy sons of Neptune, who had been waiting the result of our harangue.

The ship had appeared, coming round the North Foreland, while it was yet day-light, and her form was now indistinctly seen through the shades of evening, in a dark massy outline, made more palpable by a light at her mast head as a signal of her presence, but we had a drag unexpectedly put on our movements, in the shape of a demand, which it was neither convenient nor prudent to satisfy.

The reasonable expectation, however, that a spirit of competition might be found even among boatmen in their vocation, did not allow us to capitulate, until we discovered that there existed a monopoly, in virtue of a compact and a joint-stock among the whole fraternity at Deal, and that they regulated their respective duties in turns, with the privilege of selecting, as occasion might require, any of the boats belonging to them collectively.

In this dilemma, we proposed making a signal to the ship, by means of flashes of ignited gunpowder, not only that our captain might be aware of our presence on shore, but that the possibility of his sending a boat from the ship might act as a damper on the spirit of exaction, opposed to our purpose.

"Lor bless you!" exclaimed our pertinacious companion, hitching up the waistband of his trousers as he spoke, and interweaving a forced laugh into the thread of his discourse,—"A boat from the ship, eh?—Why you had better open an account with the underwriters at Lloyd's, and have the ship come on shore for you; you'll get no boat from *her*, I can tell 'ye; she'll more likely have

her helm hard up presently, cracking down Channel with studding sails, low and aloft."

However, whether from a dread of the projected signal, tired of needless altercation, or from a qualm of conscience, which adjusted the standard of value between his demand and the *services to be performed*, he had in the mean time reduced it to seven pounds, and the sum of *three* sovereigns at length, settled the difference between us :—hence thou wilt not fail, to remember that four hundred per cent. is a conscientious reduction on the fluctuating value of labour among Deal boatmen.

Our luggage was placed in the cutter, we took our seat in her, with a heavy and dispirited heart, and were committed, body and soul, into the buoyant waters : the recoiling surf discoursed melancholy murmurings in graduated distances along the pebbly shores, realizing the spirit of Paddy Home's poetry, by—

> " Imposing silence with a *stilly* sound !"

The light at the mast-head of the *Venus* was the beacon of our destiny.

We had no sooner been hailed from the ship

than the captain's commands,—the confused voices of the crew, and the noise of the ropes working through their blocks, reached our ears, and gave note of preparation; and his anxiety to be making way with the increasing fair wind was manifested by the hasty dispatch of the boat, which conveyed us aboard, the brevity of the passing salute as we arrived on the deck, and the quick succession of his orders which followed. It was too dark to identify distinctly the person of any one on the deck, but as the lantern at the mast-head was hauled down, it cast a transitory and indefinite gleam on the surrounding objects, and discovered to us a group of females among the bustling throng, on the after-part of the deck. The vessel's head swung round to her course, the sails were trimmed to receive the freshening breeze, and to impel her on her way, and the waves following in our wake, reared and relaxed their feathery heads as they receded in succession from our view. No definite outline of shore was to be seen; a dark irregular line, whose upper limits were lost in the hazy exhalations, dotted with glimmering lights, appearing and disappearing as objects intervened between us,

gave us assurance of our rapid progress through the waters. The noisy commotion and bustle of the crew had subsided, and our little captain, with whom we had now exchanged salutation in more cordial terms, had given directions to "make all *snug* for the night." We had also passed the ordeal of introduction to our fellow passengers, when we were instinctively transferred to a solitary position near the taffrail, with our face to the shore, as effectually inoculated with a poetical ardour, without a crotchet of harmony in our souls, as if we had been a young inamorato in the heyday of romance, made desperate by the charms of a relentless mistress. It was in such a situation that the "immortal Childe" imagined his epicedium to his "native land"—and in which other rovers beyond the seas, inspired by luxuriant imaginings, have breathed their "adieus" and "farewells" to the passing gale.

"England, with all thy faults, I love thee still."

And where is the man born within her sea-girt shore, or nurtured under her cloudy and inclement canopies, whose heart does not beat a responsive

amen! We are unfortunately not only constitutionally rheumatic, asthmatic, and phlegmatic, but as defective in the attics as any one of her offspring; they severally form the component parts of the only inheritance left us by our forefathers, and although we have not yet arrived at the entire possession of the entail, we have little doubt of one day discovering a chalk mine in our bones, and enjoying the amazement of our children at our faculty of writing our name with our knuckles. We, therefore, hold sympathy with thy chalky cliffs, thy mildewing atmosphere, and fogs and frost, as incentives to the solid enjoyments of an "Englishman's fireside,"—but verily, experience hath taught us, that we value not thy manifold benefits till they cease to be within our reach:—we felt it, even in the spirit of resignation, which had gained a mastery over our weakness, and which so effectually harmonized the sentimental chords within us, that our breathing bore Æolian sounds, and brought down one of the Muses—we forget which, or it might have been *Vibilia*, a patroness of troubadours, minstrels, and organ-players, to assist us in an accompaniment.

Farewell, my country and my friends,
  The sea now rolls between us,
To diff'rent climes, for unknown ends,
  I sail—on board the *Venus*.
O'er threat'ning billows can I fly,
  And uncontroll'd conceive,
'Tis here less difficult to die
  Than 'twas on land to live.

Despair of Fortune makes me bold,
  I can in tempests sleep,
And fearless of my fate, behold
  The dangers of the deep.
I can in patience bear the load
  Of sorrow yet to come,
You pity us who range abroad,
  We pity you at home.—

'Tis true there's something touches near,
  I scarce can bid adieu;
'Tis all my hope, my care, my fear,
  And all that I pursue.
'Tis what I love, yet what I fly——

"There's a vessel right a-head," exclaimed a voice from the fore part of the deck—"starboard your helm," said the mate—"starboard," answered the man at the wheel—"meet her," added the mate—"meet her it is," rejoined the helmsman—and we passed, with astounding rapidity, close to a ship that was standing across our bows. The shock was decidedly anti-poetical; and for a few moments

our ideas were as unintelligible as a parcel of scattered type. We picked up sufficient for a concluding verse :—

Adieu, then, land of gas and steam,
  Of taxes, fog, and frost;
Of debt thou never can'st redeem,
  With profits on "*prime cost*:"
I leave thee, and I leave my friends,
  My hopes, my cares, my love;
For other climes—for unknown ends
  I sail with *Captain Dove*.

At this moment our presence was required in the cabin; and somewhat overcome by the fatigue we had undergone, and the drowsiness which usually follows change of air, and the excitement incidental to change of scene, we readily yielded to the summons as an exordium to seeking repose. We found Captain *Dove* in a state of enviable complacency over a glass of gin grog, divested of his shore-going habiliments, and at perfect ease with himself, from the pleasurable conviction that he was "*at home*." He was in every sense of the word a genuine sailor, as well from an innate hereditary feeling, acquired from his father, who had "ploughed the main" before him, as from the force of long habit; and he was divested of the affectation and absur-

dities, common among some of our trading captains in "these piping times of peace," who imagine commercial enterprise incompatible with the vain-glorious aspirations of former days, and having had their hopes disappointed of becoming *heroes*, flounder in a sea of error in the endeavour to satisfy themselves that they are *gentlemen*[1]!—Long habituated to a nautical life, the heart and soul

[1] The indiscriminate application of the word *captain*, to the commanders of *merchantmen*, as well as of men-of-war, and of a company in a regiment, has been known to operate seriously on the pride of many naval and military men holding that rank, and they would desire that the word *skipper*, or schipper, from the Dutch, which means in the accepted sense, the master of a *trading* vessel, should be exclusively appropriated to the less *distinguished* individuals of the order. The joke is, however, carried too far: we remember the circumstance of a young tyro in the field of Neptune, who having failed advancement in the King's naval service, and possessing considerable interest with the oriental clique in Leadenhall Street, succeeded to the command of one of their ships. The youngster gloried in the superior outside lendings of a tolerable tailor, and among other absurdities appertaining to the *dandy*, he wore *red-morocco* heels to his boots. Arriving on board, after the ship had been prepared for sailing, he forthwith called for the steward:—"Oh, steward—ā—my ā—slippers—where's the—ā—mate."—Hearing the steward inform the mate that "the captain" wanted him—"Here, sir—steward—I—ā—desire you will not call me—'*Captain*'—I have no desire—ā—to be ā—taken for ā *trader!*—*Mister*, if you please—until my father dies—who is a Baronet!—Now where's the mate—Oh! Mr.—ā—what's your name—ā—*convey me to India!*"—The boy ought to have been whipped, and put to bed.

of Captain Dove had become centered in his ship, and the element in which she lived—the sea was essential to his existence: his ship, his natural habitation—his cabin, his drawing room; and the only periods from his boyhood when he might really be said to have been absent from home, were the intervals between his voyages, when necessity rather than inclination had placed him on shore. Even his walk was amphibious, indicating a stiffness in the limbs from the habit of wearing "*sea legs*," which caused a pendulous motion of the body like the waddle of a duck, or the alternate movement of the distended legs of a pair of compasses; and his short robust stature added materially to the singularity of his action. His face was rather of the bacchanalian order, with a pleasing expression of mouth, and small laughing eyes; the *contour* bearing the index of benevolence and good temper. In his language, he frequently indulged in a *non sequitur*, especially when speaking of, or *to* his ship, which he often did with expressions of enthusiastic admiration and regard. A love of "*Raleigh's* pungent plant," and of that fattening compound, yclept "gin and water," appeared to him to constitute one of the cardinal virtues, and

he failed not to hug his sides in exquisite delight and satisfaction when mixing himself up in *cordial* co-operation with those essential ingredients of mundane felicity, and with that recreative adjunct—a game at cribbage.

Our party consisted of Mrs. Georgiana Ghumbs, a widow, not very fair, extremely fat, and considerably past forty; her son, John Triptolemus Ghumbs, who had arrived at that unfortunate age between boyhood and puberty without any signs of precocious intellect, and to whom his mamma had as yet yielded every thing but a *cravat* and *surtout*, the height of his ambition, in exchange for a plaited frill and pin'fore. The three Misses Bangs, creoles of the island of ————, returning from a fruitless search after *health*—the *ostensible* object of their trans-Atlantic trip. Miss Amelia Denton, a pretty little ladybird from boarding-school, whom our Captain, in the plenitude of his benevolence, had brought to England for education, and who, in default of a suitable remittance for her initiation, had been unexpectedly sent on board, like a parcel, directed to her friends in the West Indies:—and our own dear selves—but "we know not ourselves."

If steam locomotion had not done so much to introduce to the inquisitive as well as the *sentimental* traveller, the ordinary details of a cabin on board a steam-boat, we might feel disposed to describe that of a sailing vessel, which differs from the former only in respect of embellishments and superior accommodation, according to their respective dimensions.

The ladies were seated on either side of the cabin on board the Venus, according to the direction of their respective sleeping berths, looking piteously sympathetic at each other, and John Triptolemus, whose proportions of manhood with the habiliments of youth gave a ludicrous aspect to his occupation, was watching the progress of an apple roasting at the cabin fire, whilst Captain Dove—may the bloom of health long rest on his weather-seasoned-cheeks, was "doing the agreeable" in all the unrestrained self-will of homely independence. The feelings of his passengers were very diverse from his own—their homes were mere fabrics of the imagination, the ideal representation of those they had so recently left, or of those beyond the verge of many horizons;—they had become the inmates of a new world—they moved, breathed, and

had their being in a strange atmosphere, in an element to which they were unaccustomed. A sort of mental inebriation—a staggering confusion of ideas, pervaded their whole system, and paralyzed the ordinary functions of body and mind, producing such a compound sensation as we can imagine the silk worm, in the chrysalis state, to feel during the process of being "wound off,"—and despite of every effort to reconcile themselves to the change, an uncontrollable influence governed their inclinations. Each was substantially alone although in community of persons, their most prominent characteristics, predilections, and habits were in abeyance, and all the *repellent* qualities of their nature were in a state of active fermentation. They were *multilaterals*, there was no dove-tailing one with another. What a solace is *bed* on such occasions!—In the name of all that is lovely, dear reader, do not start a query on the subject,—Ladies, good night!

We left Triptolemus to the dictum of his mamma, and with Captain Dove ascended the deck, and when drowsiness announced that Nature's soft nurse waited us below,—

We steep'd "our senses in forgetfulness."

CHAPTER IV.

THE BAY OF BISCAY—PORPOISES, &c.—SAILOR'S PRESCIENCE—A GALE—CAPTAIN DOVE AND HIS DARLING—THE CYCLOPS—LORD COLVILLE AND THE GRASSHOPPER—THE MELPOMENE'S MAINMAST—USEFUL MEMORANDA—A GAME OF CRIBBAGE—PORTO SANTO.

> "The morning watch was come; the vessel lay
> Her course, and gently made her liquid way;
> The cloven billow flashed from off her prow
> In furrows formed by that majestic plough."
>
> *Byron.*

THE morning opened upon us a hazy horizon with equivocal signs of land on our starboard side; the breeze had freshened in the night, and continued to blow from the fair point, and our good ship, like a sea-nymph, sported with the billows as she pursued her steady course down Channel.—We passed several vessels *homeward* bound, contending with the winds and the waves, so auspicious to *our* purpose;—some had come from the east, some from the west, some with rich cargoes, others in ballast,—

they had made northings and southings—plane-sailing and traverse courses, had encountered gales and storms, and calms, and all the varied vicissitudes of the ocean, and were now opposed by adverse winds, and were denied entrance to the havens they had so long sought—*such is life!*

On the fifth day we found ourselves in that turbulent province of Neptune's domain—the bay of Biscay, celebrated for storms and swells, porpoises, sea-gulls, and Mother Carey's chickens[1]; and the appearance of a drove of the former, proceeding against the direction of the wind, which had brought us thus far on our voyage, was deemed by the sailors to be prophetic of a gale from the opposite quarter. There was an apparent affectation of sober seriousness about the gambols of these gentry, as they pursued their course with a sort of rocking-horse motion on the surface, which reminded us of a party of undertakers, *performing* a funeral, and their sombre colour, and the more gloomy aspect of the elements, indicated a general mourning on account of our fair wind, which was

[1] The stormy petrel.

now "*dying* away." With all his superstition, *Jack*, in this instance, proved his prescience to be infallible—the wind ceased to blow, but the waves continued a sluggish cross motion, with a long swell from the southward and westward, causing the ship to roll immoderately.—Heaven bless ye, ladies!—of all the physical calamities that have been entailed upon voyagers from the days of Noah, there is none equal in exquisite torment and torture, to a genuine unequivocal attack of sea-sickness; it is anti-social in the extreme, and it comes upon one in the very heart and spirit of our recreations, embodying with it more real misery, and as much genuine selfishness as can well be concentrated under the operation of any one disorder in Christendom. It has been admitted by an eminent physician, that medicine is intended, in *most* cases, to amuse the mind whilst Nature is curing the disease: this redoubted disorder is among the exceptions; mind and body are compatient, and all your efforts to amuse the one, or to assuage the other, *rise up* in judgment against you. We were once sea-sick for a whole week, and we shall never forget the desolating revulsion it produced within us, driving

the inward man into a corner of himself, and to speak to him was to produce such a sensation, as we could imagine a telescope to feel,—if it had feeling,—upon having its tubes forcibly pulled out against its inclination—all sympathy was swallowed up in self.

For four-and-twenty hours the elements were extremely mysterious—the clouds hung low and misty, and being more massed and dense in some places than in others, the rays of the sun occasionally penetrated where they were most pervious, throwing alternate strata of light and shade across the dark heaving ocean, their fitful glances rather promoting in general effect, than dissipating the prevailing gloom.—

Captain Dove cogitated, and soliloquized—the topsails were reefed—the top-gallant masts were struck—"*dead lights*" were talked of, and we thought of to-morrow. At length old Neptune got up in a monstrous rage, as if we had been poachers on his preserves, and before morning we were under storm-staysails, with the wind 'dead on end,' the Venus reeling and pitching and lurching in admirable disorder.

It is a glorious sight to behold the hoary-headed

billows, rearing in turns their haughty crests, now advancing with undulating surfaces, and now retiring as if to renew their strength, forming with their stupendous heads ridges of moving mountains—and with their intermediate bases immense valleys of curling waters—the ship a crazy tenement in the valley of death, a few planks only between life and eternity—now high, now low, now on this side, now on the other—at one moment her head lifted to the skies at the verge of a mountain's breaking brow, the next driving her way down the watery abyss, with an immense sea of threatening surges following in her wake, and rearing its awful head over her stern as if bent upon overwhelming her, and then raising its ample base to heave her from destruction.

It has been observed by a celebrated writer, that "the existence of a man may be continued for seventy years, and he may pass through an incalculable variety of fortunes, while yet there may be many a nerve and vein of character that shall have lain dormant in him from the cradle to the grave, if he have never encountered an equal,—one to whom he has stood forth as open and undisguised

as to his own soul, between whom and himself every thought has been shaped into words, and they have mutually poured their sensations into each other's bosom, even as a mighty river carries along with it all the spars and corks and feathers and straws, that float upon its stream."—There is no question about the matter: and many a nerve too, shall have lain dormant—many a chord have remained untouched, if he have never encountered a genuine storm at sea, and, free from qualms of stomach and of conscience, have become so mixed up with the soul-absorbing mightiness of the raging elements, that worldly prejudices and worldly fortunes have fallen beneath the scope of his comprehension.—It is then, the imperfections—the asperities of his nature sink deep in the crucible of his material being, and his soul assuming all its ethereal dignity, stands forth open and undisguised before his Maker, with every thought shaped into adoration, every word into praise.—

"Who thinks of self, when gazing on the sky?
And who, though gazing lower, ever thought,
In the young moments when the heart is taught
Time's lesson,—of man's baseness or his own?
All nature is his realm—and love his throne!"

Captain Dove was as devoted to his Venus, night and day during the gale, as if it had been the period of her accouchement. He occasionally seated himself on a cherry-tree chair, which was fastened to the weather side of the quarter deck, and

> With replenish'd pipe and oft repeated draughts,
> He'd watch the motions of his ocean queen.

"That's right, my little beauty," he would say, as she raised her head high on the buoyant waves; and then addressing the helmsman, as she descended into the foaming trough, "mind your weather-helm now—e-a-se her, ease her, that's right—there she goes like a duck, bless her little heart—boy, a glass of gin and water—meet her again—there—just let her go her own way, only ease her now and then—don't gripe her—she'll go like a race-horse, if you let her alone, but she kicks if you give her spoke too much—forecastle there! take a pull of the foresheet—mind what you're about—don't yaw her about so—treat her kindly, can't you?—you may do any thing with her with kindness; how's her head now?" "Nor-west and by west," replied the helmsman. "Well done, my little darling—she's the

prettiest ship that ever came out of the kingdom of heaven—boy, a glass of gin and water."

Really sailors are very odd sort of men, their aquatic habits engraft upon them peculiarities which never fail to distinguish them from the rest of mankind; the howling of the tempest affects not them; they take their watch and watch, and sleep in their coffin more soundly, rocked by the buoyant billows, with death for a bed-fellow—a plank only between them, than a prince on a bed of down[1]. Their benevolence and kindly feelings are proverbial; superinduced probably by a mutual dependence upon each other, by a companionship in fortune and in peril, whence their virtues and their foibles, and their sympathies, become interfused, and the little community in which they are accustomed to move, assumes more the character of a large family, than of a society composed of all the discordant elements which mark communities in general.

"It is the *Cyclops*," said Captain Dove, who had

[1] It is a sailor's boast that he eats his plate, which is commonly a *biscuit;* that he sleeps in his coffin, his *hammock;* and that he walks every day over his grave, the *ocean.*

been some time examining with a spy-glass an object, which, to the naked eye, was scarce perceptible, and when detected was not bigger than the point of a needle erect from the horizon, but which was evidently the mast of a vessel, so distant from us that her hull was far below the verge of it. "Dolland for ever, my dear captain, or thou art endowed with ubiquity—it may be *Argus*, I take it, upon the same surety." "I'll wager my life it is the Cyclops," he repeated, not appearing to regard our scruples, "she lay at Gravesend with the Venus, and I know her by the splice in her main-top-gallant stay." He was evidently anxious to prove to us that, if his perceptions, in common with those of his fraternity, were circumscribed within the bounds which a species of *esprit de corps* among sailors defines for them, those perceptions were proportionately vivid and comprehensive, as are those of a blind person, except the one of which he is totally destitute. "If it is not the Cyclops," said he, "I don't know a bowsprit from a marline spike, and I was never deceived but once." We had seated ourselves on the Companion, regarding the lulling of the storm and the gradual closing of the day.

Captain Dove had already taken his third glass of "gin and water," and his ratiocinative faculties had acquired a fluency under the influence of smoking. "I'll tell you how it was," he continued; "the Melpomene has arrived before us, said I, as we were standing into Portsmouth Harbour; 'that's impossible,' said Captain O'Brien of the *Vixen*, who had lost his ship, and came home passenger with me; and I thought so myself, but there she was, on the other side of a number of vessels whose masts and yards looked like a forest of firs; —I could only see her *mainmast*—'it's impossible,' said O'Brien again, 'she sails like a washing tub'—that was true enough, and my little ship, the *Grasshopper*, was built like a *wedge*, and sailed like a *flying fish*, nothing could touch her. I have had ten knots out of her on a bowline many times—and I don't forget how I astonished the Commodore on the passage home; we started under convoy, about a hundred sail of us, and there were some desperate heavy sailors among 'em; my little ship was always a-head of her station with her topsails lowered on the caps, while some of 'em were under royals and studding-sails. The commodore got in a rage, and

now and then sent a shot across our bows, which obliged us to luff round and heave to; one day we were about four points on his weather bow a-head of our station—whiz came a shot, and up went a signal calling me on board. Lord Colville commanded the convoy, and these lords always carry their authority under sky-scrapers and heavenly-disturbers. Whew! when I got on board, at the same time with two other masters, his Lordship began paying out handsomely.

"'What is the reason you don't keep your ships in their stations? what ship do you belong to, Sir?'

"'I don't belong to any ship, my Lord.'

"'The devil you don't—then pray, Sir, what brig?'

"'No brig, either.'

"'D—n it, Sir, what do you mean?' said he.

"'Why,' said I—'I mean that the ship *belongs* to me.'"

This peroration was accompanied with a short suppressed laugh, that appeared the prolongation of an inward sensation of joy, which shook his sides and caused him to hitch up his trousers as if to give it accommodation; he walked a few steps, and re-

turned, as if suddenly furnished with supplementary information.

"I can't help her sailing faster than any other ship in the fleet, says I; his Lordship did'nt know what to do, whether to jump down my throat, or knock me down with the speaking trumpet; but, he threatened to blow the Grasshopper out of the water with a broadside, if she was out of her station again. Avast heaving, thought I to myself—I'll give you an opportunity before next watch,'—the Grasshopper was not in her station three hours afterwards. It was no sooner dark, than I clapped every stitch upon her she could carry, and in the morning she was out of sight. I staked her sailing, and a dozen twelve pounders, with a good crew, against her insurance—boy! a glass of gin and water—

"Well, as I was saying, we arrived in Portsmouth harbour, and I betted O'Brien that the Melpomene had arrived, but I was deceived, it was only her *mainmast*, which being too short for her, she had left it in the dock-yard at *Rio*, and another ship had got it; I did'nt lose the wager though, it was a drawn bet."

The night came *on*, the sea went *down*, the wind came *up*, the choicest blow Æolus could send us, and in the morning Cyclops had lost his one eye, he was "*out of sight*;" but Cyclops was no sailor, and the Venus had been marvellously alert. Her goddess-ship had now ceased reeling, her sails were again expanded to the freshening breeze, the sun shone forth resplendently, and the ladies came on deck to share the bounties of the smiling day. They were wan: their better looks had been wrecked in the storm. Mrs. Ghumbs, who looked like the centre of *gravity* herself, had been constantly in dread of the centre falling without the base, and she had not ventured on her legs farther than across the cabin, since her arrival on board; and, in that undertaking she had been occasionally assisted by her sable attendant. In her ascent to the quarter deck, she was preceded by *Angelique*—such was the very pre-possessing name of her domestique—who bore a deal box, the proportions of which gave instant assurance that it had been "*made to order*," and that Mrs. Ghumbs could claim it as her own. In its construction the law of gravitation had been studiously regarded; its

depth about a foot, corresponded exactly with the height deemed most convenient and *safe* for a seat, and its length and breadth not only provided for the expansion of the person whose weight it was designed to bear *without*, but for the *solid* contents it was intended should be contained *within*. Mrs. Ghumbs had crossed the ocean twice before: the Atlantic had separated her from her husband by mutual consent; and her settlement, although in direct contravention of the terms upon which they had mutually settled in life, had reconciled her to the prospective issue of the divorce. "Short crops and low prices," had nevertheless afforded grounds for recriminatory correspondence, till a liver complaint arbitrated between them, and the award was given in her favour by the sudden dissolution of Mr. Ghumbs, and the entire reversion of Coco-nut Hall to herself during life. In proceeding to take possession, she bethought herself of all that experience had taught her to require on a *voyage*, and the box in question was the receptacle of divers little *notions* essential to her convenience and comfort; and in order that it might never be out of her sight, or out of her reach, foresight and deliberation

had designed it for the two-fold purpose we have mentioned.

We find in our "Note Book," the following memoranda: "Ginger cakes to be put up in tin canisters; they are grateful to a weak stomach, removing irritability and nausea, and suppressing flatulency; they are also an agreeable check to the appetite an hour before dinner with a glass of *cherry-brandy*."

"If you cannot insure soft bread on the voyage, which the captain ought to provide, have some *rusks*, or French rolls cut in slices, and toasted, put up in tin boxes: the packages will become useful afterwards."

"*Cooling* medicines for a *warm* climate, *to be had from Apothecaries' Hall*." Verbatim from Mrs. Ghumbs.

"N.B. The Dripstone upset in the gale: Mrs. Ghumbs provided with a piece of fine gauze to strain the water."

A man may gain information or useful knowledge in whatever situation he may happen to be placed if he be not too proud to ask for it, or to listen

to those who may be ready to afford it; and many self evident facts and useful hints would escape our observation and attention, but for the gratuitous intelligence of those who are obscure in capacity, or beneath us in society. The pedlar on the road side is not without a store of knowledge, however circumscribed it may be, and the circumstance of his pursuits being different to our own, has presented to him objects unseen by ourselves, and yielded to him information of which we are ignorant; and if that information be not directly useful to us, it may interest us for the time, or leave an impression on the mind for reflection to feed on, which may prove the germ of a profitable theory.

The weather was now settled, and the ship glided almost imperceptibly through the water; our vocation became more uniform, and every expedient was adopted to "dissipate dulness and give time a shove." Mrs. Ghumbs, seated on her box on deck, and expanded into the proportion of a Norfolk Biffin, knitted garters and dialogued with the captain—Needlework, painting and reading, walk-

ing and talking, engaged the attention of the three sisters, and Triptolemus and Amelia reciprocated in unrestrained sportiveness, till Captain Dove became *alarmed* for his ward, and Mrs. Ghumbs for her son.

"A glass of gin and water," said the captain, one evening, as we entered the cabin, where he was engaged at the game of cribbage with Mrs. Ghumbs. John, the cabin boy, who had been watching the progress of the game, had so far allowed drowsiness to overtake him as to be deaf to a demand which sounded as the echo of a requisition which had been satisfied at least a dozen times. "Fifteen-two, fifteen-four, and a pair is six"—said Mrs. Ghumbs—"and one for his *nob*," continued the captain, who at that moment brought his knuckles to bear on the cranium of Master John with such astounding emphasis, that the boy roared out his accustomary "Yes, Sir," with the voice of a maniac, imagining that the demand had that moment been made from the quarter deck, and that a vociferous reply was required by the distance.

The land of Porto Santo rose up before us on the eleventh day from the Downs, and as we approached it, the wind ceased to blow that we might stop to look at it. This island was discovered in 1418, by John Gonzales Zarco and Tristan Vaz, who had been driven from the African coast in a gale. Madeira was first seen from it in the following year.

PORTO SANTO.

The extremes bearing from S. E. by S. to S. E.

CHAPTER V.

CALMS AND CURRENTS—THE NAUTILUS—GULF-WEED—THE TELAGIC SCYLLA—MEDUSÆ—PILOT-FISH—SHARKS—A DEAD CALM—WHISTLING FOR A WIND—SAILOR'S VOCATION—A BREEZE—A CATASTROPHE.

"Thou glorious mirror; where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests;—in all time
Calm or convuls'd—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Iceing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark heaving:—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity!—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee—thou go'st forth, dread, fathomless, alone."

Byron.

For some days the winds were light and baffling, and occasional calms left us entirely to the influence of a slight current which conveyed us a few miles in the direction of our course, whilst the smooth glassy surface of the surrounding waters gave no token of our movement; in the mean time, light

vagrant airs sported on their bosom, producing here and there a gentle ripple, sometimes running in long narrow veins, at others in detached concentrated figures, where eddying currents had settled, and occasionally with more palpable signs of a steady and encreasing breeze approaching us from the horizon.

The tender *Nautilus*, "the ocean Mab, the fairy of the sea," was seen floating its light fragile form on the peaceful surface, opening its gossamer sails to the passing zephyrs, luxuriating in the lifetime of a day—vitality centered in an atom, an atom holding a rank, and having an unity or connexion of purpose, in the interminable scale of the creation, and capable of exalting the conceptions of man of its mysterious, boundless, and ever varying beauties. It seemed as if the genius of *repose* had placed it as a beauty-spot on the face of the slumbering ocean, that its diminutive and delicate form might give assurance of continued peace.

> "He, when the lightning-wing'd tornados sweep
> The surge, is safe—his port is in the deep,
> And triumphs o'er the Armadas of mankind
> Which shake the world, yet crumble in the wind."

within it[1]. Innumerable *blubbers*, or medusæ, of various and singular shapes, floated in different depths below the surface, some of them with long filaments, and so extremely transparent that they were scarcely perceptible, and others were seen only when the sun's beams penetrated, with increased power, the translucent element[2]. Fishes also, now and then, showed their shining sides as

[1] The appearance of these vast fields of weed, together with numerous sea fowl, had great influence in dispelling the fear of the first navigators to the new world, who readily construed it into an indication that land was at no great distance.

[2] Captain Scoresby, during one of his voyages to the arctic regions, where it appears the medusæ and other marine animals abound, examined a quantity of sea water, which had acquired an olive green colour from the multitude of them it contained. "They were about a quarter of an inch asunder. In this proportion a cubic inch of water would contain 64, a cubic foot 110,592, a cubic fathom 23,887,872, and a cubic mile about 23,888,000,000,000. From soundings made in the situation, where these animals were found, it is probable the sea is upwards of a mile in depth, but whether these substances occupy the whole depth is uncertain; provided, however, the depth to which they extend be but 250 fathoms, the above immense number of one species may occur in a space of two miles square. It may give a better conception of the amount of medusæ in this extent, if we calculate the length of time that would be requisite for a certain number of persons to count the quantity: allowing that one person could count a million in seven days, which is barely possible, it would have required that 80,000 persons should have commenced counting at the creation of the world to complete the enumeration at the present time."

they turned suddenly in their sports, or to dart at their prey, and were again lost in the impenetrable depths. Among the number the dolphin was recognized by the bright reflection of its vivid colours; and huge monsters and myriads of smaller creatures, of no determinate form, mixed in the living group—

> "A breathing and a busy world,
> Around the self same centre hurl'd"—

veluti in speculum.—During this time two or three *pilot fish* kept their station in the eddying waters about the vessel's rudder—This little fish, as it is seen in the water, resembles the perch in appearance, having dark blue or purple stripes across the back, but it is less attenuated in its proportions, being much deeper over the shoulders; neither is it armed with bristles, as the perch is.—The pilot fish is remarkable for its constant attendance on the *shark* in the character of court-sycophant, and adviser of the aquatic Domitian—an office said to be co-ordinate with that of the jackall to the lion, whose duty it is to direct the monster in pursuit of his prey. The royal master of these younkers had

probably been condemned by a jury of British sailors, and his little satellites were consequently out of office.—We had one of these sanguinary despots of the deep prowling about the ship for several days, and the sailors made many attempts to entrap him with a baited hook, but he managed to dislodge, with impunity, two or three pieces of salt pork, of two pounds each, much to Jack's mortification, who found the experiment more expensive than agreeable. The hook was attached to about three yards of iron chain at the end of a strong rope, and after various expedients, the bait was secured to it with a lashing—but to no purpose—the sagacious old fellow was too wary, and he kept from the surface, probably in the strength of his wisdom, to avoid the harpoon. The water being so very clear, we could see him about twenty or thirty yards under the surface, and the bait being again sunk he attacked it with violence, as if annoyed at the intrusion, but with sufficient caution to avoid the hook; he at length succeeded in extracting the bait, as he had done before, causing a great vibration of the chain in the attempt, which although so far under the water was distinctly heard

upon deck, and the rope was sensibly agitated in the sailor's hands. After having swallowed the morsel, the monster followed the hook as it was drawn to the surface, gave us a parting salute, and then sheered off. He was an immense fellow, about 20 feet in length, and he evinced a greater degree of sagacity than the voracious habits of this fish usually admit of their practising, regardless of the proverb, *Occultum visus decurrere piscis ad hamum.*—It was remarked, that he was unattended by the pilot fish, unless perchance they were closeted in the anti-chamber of his stomach—whither it is said, they occasionally fly from danger, or to enjoy relaxation from their duties,—and those which had been seen about the ship showed no signs of a disposition to give him their services [1].

The most perfect calm now prevailed: not the

[1] The friendly compact subsisting between these lilliputians and their monster mate, is not more remarkable than the singular contrivance which nature has suggested to them, as well as to other inhabitants of the ocean, for the like preservation of their young. Besides the shark, the dog-fish, and the squatina are among those which harbour their offspring within them on approach of danger. "It is in like manner affirmed," says an old writer "that the whale, wherever she goes, hath marching before her a little fish like a sea-gudgeon, which from that service is called her *guide*. The whale follows him, suffering herself to be led and turned, as easily as the rudder causes the ship to turn about; and in requital

slightest air stirred, sufficient even to disturb the *dog-vane*[1]—the attendance of the helmsman at the wheel was unnecessary, and the vessel was left to herself. In the day, a clear blue cloudless sky o'er-canopied the visible horizon, the vivifying sun pursuing his course over our heads; at night the starry firmament was mirrored in the glassy deep, and no horizon was to be seen; the heavens and the waters were commingled, forming a globular world of themselves, and the ship appeared suspended as the central object; it was the beau idéal of magnificent solemnity—the creation slumbering!—so clear and transparent were the waters, that the end or bottom of the rudder was distinctly seen from the *taffrail*, and gave to the beholder

of this service, whereas whatever enters into the horrid chaos of this monster's throat, is immediately lost and devoured, this little fish makes it his retiring, and his resting place; and while he lyes there asleep the whale stirs not, but as soon as he gets out she presently follows him: and if it happen the said fish should be a little out of the way, she wanders up and down striking many times against the rocks, as a ship without a rudder; which thing *Plutarch* affirms that himself was an eye-witness of, in the island of *Anticyra*."—Davies' Hist. Carribby Islands, 1666.

[1] The dog-vane consists of a few of the lightest feathers that can be procured, and sometimes of one feather, attached to a piece of string, intended to show the direction whence the lightest airs may proceed, when the other vanes are not disturbed.

the idea, that we were resting on a pivot. Silence might be said to be supreme, for there was nothing to mark that it might be disturbed, save the occasional whisper of the topmost vane, turned by a passing zephyr, high above our heads, or as the vessel gently and almost imperceptibly, heeled to the long undulating motion of the unruffled surface. She lay like a night-mare on the heaving bosom of the boundless deep. We were all more or less impressed with the prevailing stillness—

> "Such harmony is in immortal souls;
> But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it:"

the watch ventured to sleep without dereliction of duty, and if one or two of the number lounged over the gangway, or lay meditating on the deck, no other sound was heard, and that only at intervals, than the inward humming of an old tune, the superstitious practice among sailors of whistling for a wind, or the whispering breathings of a budding passion between Triptolemus and Amelia Denton. No situation, or at least no combination of elementary influences, could be better adapted to promote the germinating principle within them,

to make their young blood run riot in their veins. Trees and rivulets and velvet banks are essential to the formation of a love scene, when it is made up of patches; but here it was formed of one determinate whole, the masterpiece of sublimity and beauty—the atmosphere pure from the vault of heaven, the odour of pitch and tar excelling that breathed from violets and jasmine, and the light sounds we have mentioned surpassing the song of nightingale or thrush, because consistent, and in harmony with the whole machinery of the scene:—Master Ovid had no idea of the torrid zone, when he wrote "*non est habitabilis æstu.*"

Had we been in other latitudes we might reasonably have calculated upon rough weather in compliment to the old saying, "after a calm comes a storm," and *vice versâ*, and the prophetic remark of one of our crew to his shipmate, who had been some time cogitating over the gangway, and whistling for a wind, might have predisposed us to fear the consequences—"Clap a stopper on that whistle and belay it,"—said he, "you'll have wind enough, I guess, before your hands get soft. It's doing double duty somewheres, and when we gets hold

on it, the timbers of the old witch 'll crack again, I warrant ye."—"Well, there's one comfort, Tom: it can't last for ever, that's pretty certain—the ship'll rot first, and while there's pay and grub, why we has the best on't." This was uttered with genuine Doric simplicity, his mind was quite reconciled to the issue, and there was more philosophy in the confession, than the sternest syllogist dare venture to dispute; for after all, the *ne plus ultra* of modern philosophy is but to satisfy the mind by artificial means, when nature is at cross purposes with herself.

During the prevalence of these calms, there was no lack of employment for the crew during the day. Science had established for us the certainty that we were within the pacific province of Neptune's wide domain, and that only at particular seasons, or within prescribed bounds, he manifested the turbulent disposition of his power; and if, as Jack sagaciously surmised, the breezes were doing double duty in another quarter, we calculated with certainty, that they would at length attend us with a good grace, and compensate us for the time we had waited for them.

In the day-time, the sailors were engaged in mending the spare sails, "in setting up" the rigging, picking old ropes into oakum, for the purpose of caulking the seams of the decks or ship's sides, spinning spun-yarn or making gaskets, re-stowing the hold, in order to trim the ship, occasionally made needful by the consumption of provisions and water, or the shifting or settling of the cargo; and a variety of petty jobs, which the constant working and wear of a ship's gear render necessary. Indeed, a sailor's life is by no means of so indolent and uninteresting a character, as is generally imagined by landmen; but it owes much of its interest to the uncertainty and consequent variety of its details. It is true that the sphere of action on board-ship is very circumscribed, and destitute of the charms and elegancies of more polished society; but to the speculative or contemplative mind, it affords constant and abundant materials on which to feed, and such as serve to elevate rather than to depress the moral and intellectual faculties of man. There are manifold resources for the mind to revel in at leisure, other than the every day routine of roast and boiled, or regard

to the changes of the capricious elements. Even the smallest object appearing on the surface, serves to break the monotonous uniformity of the surrounding waters, and never fails to excite intense interest with all on board, especially in that contemplative season of a sea life—a calm. Speculation is immediately alive as to the nature or origin of the object, the cause of its appearance: and, according to its distance, every form association can afford it, is assumed in succession. "It is a bird, or a turtle: no, it's a bottle," perhaps thrown overboard, with the sad memorial within it, of some vessel's disastrous fate, to stand the buffeting of many a turbulent gale, to set on edge the teeth of some hungry shark, or to disappoint the hopes of a ravenous sea-bird, ere it reveal the appalling secret of its purpose; and probably it has afforded the same or similar speculations to the inmates of other ships, who may have passed it in their trackless course.

"All hands make sail," at length sounded in our ears. A long dark line appeared on the horizon from the north-east, a sufficient indication of a coming breeze, to warrant preparation for it: it gradu-

ally increased in width as it approached; and before all the sails could be prepared to receive it, the unruffled surface of the waters in our wake, jumped up in turbulent motion, whilst the other portion a-head of us, gradually awaking from its slumbers, was soon seen in uniform animation; the vessel danced as with joy on the buoyant billows, and the white bosoms of her ample canvas swelled with the invisible and creeping wind.

Each day reduced, in rapid strides, the span of our voyage, and we began to think of other and different scenes. The Venus was putting on her holiday attire: her suit of sails were changed, her topmasts were scraped and fresh greased, her rigging set up and newly "rattled down," and her sides were in course of painting, while she pursued her impetuous course, at the rate of eight miles in the hour, through the yielding waters.

Gracious Heaven!—what sound is that? The ship heels to the wind, and the curling waters in her wake define, by a circuitous trail, a deviation from her course—the Captain's voice is hurried and imperative, and the confusion on deck bespeaks

an urgent and a desperate cause.—We hastened from the cabin as soon as we could recover ourselves from the leeward part of it, where we had been suddenly conveyed by the heeling of the vessel. The crew were collected at the after-part of the quarter-deck, hastily preparing one of the quarter boats: every thing indicated consternation and alarm: "*Cut away, my lads!—stand by to jump in,*" exclaimed Captain Dove.—A heavy deep drawn sigh called our attention in a different direction—it was Mrs. Ghumbs *on her legs.*—"Dear me! what a shocking thing," she exclaimed, as we exchanged a hasty and inquiring look, and some big round drops started at the moment from her eyes, "I fear there's no chance!"—"*Lower away handsomely,*" continued the Captain; and the boat descended to the surface with six of the crew. "*Now then, my lads, pull away!—starboard your helm,—there, straight as you go;*"—and every eye was directed to one point, every heart throbbing responsive to the sound of the oars, and the rocking motion of the boatmen.

The ship had been brought round suddenly, and without preparation, the moment the cries of two

men, who had fallen overboard, called attention to their situation; but so great was her velocity, with all sail set going before the wind, that by the time her progress was stopped, their heads were scarce to be seen at the opposite point of a semi-circle of *dead water*, which marked the course she had taken, and the intervening waves occasionally hid them from our view.—The men in the boat, being so much nearer the surface, could not behold even the heads of their unfortunate shipmates: they pulled towards the spot by conjecture, or by the direction given to them by the Captain at starting; and we continued to watch their progress with intense anxiety, and with apprehension that the objects of our solicitude would be exhausted before assistance could be afforded to them.

There are times when all the faculties of the human soul seem to assume a co-ordinate rank, and to converge, to concentrate, and interfuse one with another, as if in unison of purpose to produce one great effort, one intense and indivisible feeling, no matter whether of hope or fear, joy or sorrow, love or hatred, as each in turn may acquire the co-operation of the whole—or when all, save one, be-

come so paralyzed or subordinate in action, that we cease to be under their respective influence.—It was thus we stood assembled together on the deck, casrce conscious of each other's presence, all absorbed by one feeling, all intent on one purpose: the sails were left flapping in the wind, and the wind whistled mournfully through the rigging, as if performing a dirge over the departed. At length doubts were entertained whether the heads of the unfortunate seamen were yet to be seen—"I can only see *one*," exclaimed Captain Dove, who had stationed himself on the mizen rigging, to have a more extensive view, "and the boat is approaching the spot—it is now pulling in a different direction." —"Oh! I fear it's too late," observed Mrs. Ghumbs. —"It turns again," continued the Captain, "and now stops."—"They've got them, they are taking them into the boat," said one of the crew. It was evident they were not pulling, and that some were standing up, but we could not discern their motions distinctly: they resumed their seats, and pulled towards the ship—Captain Dove descended to the deck.

Hope and fear contended for the mastery over

us, as the boat approached. We could not see the sufferers, but they were probably at the bottom of the boat, exhausted—perhaps insensible—"Yes, there is one!"—exclaimed Triptolemus,—"I see his head!"—"It's *Vernon*, then, no doubt," said one of the crew; "he is the best swimmer, and poor *Wentworth's* gone."

The boat came alongside—we looked into it—but no one spoke—the ladies descended mournfully to the cabin: Charles Vernon and Wentworth were not of this life,—the hat of the former was all that was found.

"And could you see nothing of them?" inquired Captain Dove, when the crew came on deck. "We saw one of them for some time, but when we got to the spot he had disappeared, and the water was the colour of blood: at that moment we thought we saw him again above water; but it was the back fin of one of the largest sharks I ever beheld, and we afterwards saw three of them."

"Poor fellows!"—exclaimed Captain Dove with emotion;—"poor fellows," he repeated to himself as he walked to the opposite gangway. For a few moments he was absorbed in painful reflection—he

passed the fingers of his right hand across his eyelids as he resumed his station on the quarter-deck, and he gave orders to make sail, with a dispirited and oppressed heart.

The two sufferers had been employed painting the sides of the ship, and a plank, which formed a moving stage, was suspended overboard by two ropes at the extremities of it, for them to stand on. Vernon had been on deck, and returning to his duty full of life and animation, he jumped with boyish gaiety on the fragile board, and severed it in two.

CHAPTER VI.

DOLPHINS AND BONETAS—FLYING-FISH—A DOLPHIN TAKEN—DESCRIPTION—THE CORYPHÆNA AND THE DELPHINUS—GULLS AND BOOBIES—DESEADA.

"Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried
And danced in triumph o'er the waters wide,
The exulting sense, the pulse's madd'ning play,
That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way?"

BYRON.

THE breeze continued to increase, and the surrounding waves reared their white feathery heads in playful succession, the vessel repelling them from her sides, as she stemmed her liquid way, leaving in her wake their relaxed forms in a long trail of eddying foam. Numerous dolphins and bonetas were seen occasionally through the pellucid element, darting forward with astonishing swiftness, as if emulating her velocity, and the flying fish continued to spring in shoals above the surface, to escape their pursuers beneath, or in fear of the huge wooden monster floating on the buoyant waters.

Pursued by the dolphin, their greatest foe, as well as by the *boneta*, the flying fish leave their element to avoid destruction; but the penetrating vision of their pursuers marks their shadows on the surface, and following their course till the wings of the fugitives become relaxed and dried, which cause them to drop, with the noise of a hail-stone shower, they become an easy prey: those that escape, again rise with replenished purpose, and again and again as necessity dictates; thus passing a transitory and precarious existence, alternately an inhabitant of the air and of the water[1]. Several hundreds of them rise into air at the same moment, making a light fluttering and wirey sound with their wings; and as they wend their way in a curvated direction for the distance of three and four hundred yards, their silvery brightness, and the delicacy of their aeriel forms, beautifully contrasted with the dark blue waters beneath them, and made more vivid and sparkling in ap-

[1] The real acceptation of the word *wings*, is scarcely to be admitted, for in reality they are nothing else than two large fins situated *post bronchia*, measuring from the extremities when expanded, about the length of the fish.

pearance, as the sun's rays or the pale moon-beams catch their glistening wings, produce an effect of singular harmony and beauty, and one which seems to partake of the influence of enchantment. There is, indeed, something painfully interesting in contemplating the beautiful effect produced by these little inhabitants of the ocean, associated as it is with the hard fate that awaits them; and we might stop to inquire, whether Nature has not counteracted her own designs, by furnishing them with wings for the purpose, as it would appear, of eluding their enemies of the deep, only to become a prey to those of the upper region:

"Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim."

But Dame Nature, whose designs are not always what they appear to the finite comprehension of man, is entitled to credit for more judgment in these matters. Her boundless domain is ever presenting to us objects of no apparent utility; but experience teaches us that nothing is made in vain, and that the operations of her designs are coordinate with the necessities of her creatures. We might rather argue, therefore, that a redundant

supply of food for the inhabitants of the deep, may have occasioned this export of the little urchins to meet the deficiency among the fowls of the air, who occasionally afford a morsel in the way of barter to their aquatic neighbours.

> "With teeth and claws by Nature arm'd *they* hunt
> Nature's allowance, to supply their want:
> But *man*—with smiles, embraces, friendship, praise,
> Inhumanly his fellow's life betrays,
> With voluntary pains works his distress,
> Not through necessity, but wantonness."

A few hundred yards of line had been towing astern of the ship, with a hook at the end of it, and it was now seen carried out on one side of the ship with a great strain upon it, and the difficulty of drawing it in, was sufficient evidence that a fish of large dimensions, and of great power, was ensnared. We could at times distinctly see the captive, as it darted in various directions at the end of the line, shining through the tops of the translucent waves which intervened between us, and the velocity of the ship's way (about eight miles in the hour) added much to the lively interest of the sport. As the span of the line became contracted, the bright

glowing hues we could perceive, and which were made powerfully prismatic by the agitated water in the sun's rays, satisfied us that a dolphin was the captive, and our curiosity was the more powerfully excited by the traditional stories related of this fish, and its singular property of changing its colours when dying—

"Mille trahit moriens, adverso sole, colores."

As the limits of its range became more circumscribed it manifested a greater degree of strength, and we were apprehensive that the line would break, with the repeated plunges it made in attempting to escape. About half an hour elapsed before we could bring it sufficiently near to the vessel's side to ensure its safety on board; but this was at length effected by passing a rope with a *slip-knot* over its head, which when drawn fast round the body enabled two or three sailors to raise it to the deck, notwithstanding its continued and violent struggles.

A man ought to serve an apprenticeship on the Atlantic, or traverse the circumference of the globe, if only to witness the superlative beauties and

magical transformations of colour and effect which this fish is capable of exhibiting to the astonished beholder. It is seldom seen more than four feet in length, and most frequently between two and three feet: the extreme length of this one was upwards of four feet and a half.

The prevailing colours were yellow and blue, with gold and silver of a variety of shades, and of the most glowing and vivid description, especially about the gills, bespangled with bright *blue* spots, resembling those (except in colour) on a trout, when in high perfection; these severally relaxed into more subdued tones, then commingled, and again resumed their individual character with great brightness, especially when the fish was irritated or convulsed. After lying about a minute, the whole body assumed a cold silvery blue and purple, varying in their shades, but deepest about the back, where a bloom, like that on a dark plum, was playing on the surface: these changes were doubtless occasioned by the relaxation of the muscles, and its occasional struggles, and as the period of its dissolution approached, and during its last paroxysms, the transformations were more fre-

quent. In expiring, the whole body became violently convulsed, and as the trembling subsided, it assumed a dull silvery slate colour, so intensely cold and deathly, as to produce a corresponding feeling in the spectators. It was a painful sight, and left a melancholy impression on us all; but—

> "Quicquid habet Ortus finem timet, ibimus omnes
> Ibimus."—

And now let us, by way of *epicedium*, and in the name of all that is lovely and interesting in nature, vindicate the character of this beautiful fish, and introduce it into fashionable life. There is no creature in the creation more deserving commendation and praise, and none more shamefully traduced and misrepresented, as if in contempt of the high honours conferred upon it by the ancients, who consecrated it to their gods, and called it the *sacred* fish, owing to its supposed attachment to the human race.—Even the renowned Isaac Walton died in ignorance of its superlative beauties; and fishmongers have from time immemorial represented it ugly, that ladies might not *long* for it, thereby to avoid a demand which they could not

supply; at least, I have never been able to discover any other plausible excuse for such extraordinary pertinacity of purpose in distorting and exhibiting in effigy one of the fairest of nature's forms. *Envy* might have given a humpback and a jolt head to a beautiful woman; but to a fish without a competitor, and worthy of being a *pet*, scarcity could never justify the imposition; and I trust I may live to see lap-dogs out of fashion, and a glass vase in every drawing-room for a dolphin to gambol in. It nevertheless might be dangerous to promulgate all the strange conceits and idle fancies of many learned men respecting this singular fish—"metonymically surnamed," says an old writer, "the prince and arrow of the sea:—celebrated by many Epethites; philanthropoi, for affecting men; monogamoi, for their turtle constancy; nourished like man, embrace, joyne and go great 10 monthes—*In faciem versi dulces celebrant hymenæos Delphines, similes hominis complexique hærent;* a careful husband over his gravid associate, detesting incest, abhorring bigamy, tenderly affecting their parents, who when 300 years old, they feed and defend against other hungry fishes; and when dead (to avoid the sharks, and like marine tyrants,) carry it ashore, and

there inhume him, and bedew his sepulchre."—So saith *Aristotle*, *Ælian*, and others; and *Solinus* also affirmeth, that the great Alexander idolized a boy, and gave him pre-eminence over the priesthood of Neptune, owing to the ominous attachment shown by a dolphin to the urchin when bathing.—The dolphin grew so fond of the boy, that he would come to him when called, and letting him get on his back, would carry him whither he pleased; the boy died, and the dolphin died too—of grief for his loss.—So saith Master Pliny.

Let it be understood that we are speaking of the *Coryphæna* hippuris of the order of *thoracici*, of *Linnæus*, (the *dorado*, of the Portuguese, called also the sea-bream, and the amber-fish,) and not the *delphinus*, of the *cetaceous* tribe, to which latter all the civil things that have been said and sung in praise of the dolphin, have been usually assigned, notwithstanding it possesses none of the outward characteristics of the former, and assuredly none to excite poetical imaginings, or to confirm that traditional pre-eminence which the coryphæna, from its surpassing beauty, and singular property of changing its colours, might deservedly claim [1].

[1] Mr. Coleridge in his amusing work, "Six Months in the

The Dolphin — *Coryphæna hippurus*

Drawn from Nature

Faulkner, in his "Shipwreck," only does justice to the merits of the dolphin on the score of beauty:—

"But while his heart the fatal jav'lin thrills,
And flitting life escapes in sanguine rills,
What radiant changes strike th' astonished sight!
What glowing hues of mingled shade and light!
Not equal beauties gild the lucid west
With parting beams all o'er profusely dress'd,
Not lovelier colours paint the vernal dawn
When orient dews impearl th' enamell'd lawn,
Than from his sides in bright suffusion flow,
That now with gold empyreal seem to glow;
Now in pellucid sapphires meet the view,
And emulate the soft celestial blue;
Now beam a flaming crimson on the eye,
And now assume the purple's deeper dye;
But here description clouds each shining ray;
What terms of art can Nature's powers display?"

Let us then—"look here upon this picture,—

West Indies," speaking of the *manchineel* tree, observes, "the common stories about the fatal shade of this tree are as *fabulous* as the changing colours of the dying dolphin."

Some people are so strangely incredulous that they will listen to no statements unsupported by the ordinary occurrences of life, or such as may have passed under their own observation; and like the old woman, whose son had given a "roving commission" to his imagination in recounting the wonders he had met with in his visit to the Western Indies, readily believed that "*mountains* of sugar, and *rivers* of rum" were within the range of probability, but "fish that fly out of the sea" was a stretch beyond her comprehension or belief.

and on this:—the counterfeit presentment" of two *fishes*[1]——

It may be indeed questioned, whether the *cetaceous* dolphin (a monster by comparison) be the fish so celebrated by the ancients, or whether the great esteem in which it appears to have been held by some piscivorous *gourmands* of later days, has not gained for it a reputation even among naturalists, to which it is by no means entitled. The name, too, of the *coryphæna*, derived from the greek word κορυφη, being the common appellative for the chief or principal of any company, as of those, for instance, who composed the chorus in ancient tragedy, may be fairly said to favour the preference we would assign to it; and we have the coin of Alexander the Great preserved by *Belon*, as additional evidence to establish it. The representation on this coin, as well as those usually exhibited on fishmongers' signs, and in sculpture, although consistent with the vulgar errors, and at

[1] The *delphinus* is so frequently confounded with the *porpus*, from the resemblance to it, and from the similarity of their habits, that few persons, even among sailors, are prepared to distinguish the one from the other. We profess to give a correct likeness.

The Dolphin _ *Delphinus.*

variance with the true portrait of either of these fish, approach at no great distance to the *coryphæna*, having the declined and truncated head, and the back fin running the whole length from the back of the head to the tail. The incurvated form which is given to it corresponds in *caricature*, with the figure it occasionally assumes in its playful leap out of the water, whereas the *delphinus* exhibits a circular and comparatively sluggish motion with its back, as it appears above the surface after the manner of the *porpus* and *grampus*, which are of the same tribe.

The coryphæna is more celebrated, however, for its beauty than for the delicacy of its flesh, which is rather coarse and dry; but it is nevertheless tolerably palatable in grilled junks, with a little piquant sauce: and the sailors, notwithstanding their superstitious veneration for it alive, esteem it no bad thing to "lull the grinding stomach's hungry rage"—

"Jejunus raro stomachus vulgária temnit."

But enough of the dolphin.

We had now evidence, by an increase in the number of *gulls* and the appearance of a few *boobies*,

that we were approaching the haunts of *men.* We mean nothing derogatory to either party by the association; and our *dead-reckoning*, as the sailors call it, corresponded with the unequivocal signs that land was at no great distance.

It was about eleven in the forenoon when the joyous announcement of—"Land on the larboard bow" was made by a man aloft, and immediately afterward it was seen in the same direction from the deck; but so faint and equivocal in its form, owing to the thick haze upon the horizon, and especially in the direction to which our attention was drawn, as to be doubtful to an inexperienced eye. However, its appearance was familiar to the Captain, who at once declared it to be *Deseada*, an island on the north-east coast of *Guadaloupe*, said to be the first land discovered by Columbus on his *second* voyage to the new world.

Appearance of Deseada bearing S. W. ½ S.

The North-eastern point only was seen through the haze, presenting a bluff termination, distant from us about six or seven leagues. We altered our course about two points, steering north-west to make the Island of *Antigua*, which lies to the northward of Guadaloupe, and in about two hours, the land appeared, in that direction, in the form of two or three hillocks [1].

Verily may'st thou hug thy own dear sides, in self gratulation upon finding the land thou seekest, after traversing a desert of water, for three thousand miles, and upwards, without a *chronometer* to assist thee in thy calculations.—That said *dead*-reckoning hath an ominous signification, meaning nothing short of a speculative or hypothetical calculation of the direct distance the ship may have run, and the situation she *may* be placed in [2].

[1] The channel between Antigua and Guadaloupe, is most usually steered for by vessels bound to Jamaica, and others of the islands to the westward. Having gained the *latitude* parallel with either of those islands, it behoves thee to look to thy *longitude*, Captain—lest thy ship should be ahead of thy reckoning.

[2] Dead reckoning, in nautical phraseology, is the reckoning of the ship's way, estimated every twenty-four hours, by ascertaining with a log line thrown overboard, the number of miles she may sail in each hour,—by watching the different signs which indicate currents, &c.—and, if sailing a traverse course, the pro-

The wind slackened, and the shades of evening came over us, by the time the whole coast of Antigua appeared above the horizon, and we shortened sail as a precautionary measure, in pursuing our route between the two islands.

The moon was up: the vault of heaven unobscured, and illumined by countless stars, and the vicinity of land was indicated by that fresh vegetable fragrance, which exhales from it during the night in the tropics, and which is so delightful to the senses, after a long voyage.—It was, in the language of Moore, "a love-breathing night."—A spirit of melancholy pervaded our little society—Captain Dove only excepted—and we were each evidently speculating upon the events of to-morrow—even our friend Triptolemus evinced an uncommon share of sensibility, and in his efforts to sympathize with Amelia Denton, he sighed and looked unutterable things.

portion of leeway from the course steered. The angles are worked by geometrical calculations, to ascertain the true distance made, and the latitude and longitude the ship is in.—The altitude of the sun at noon gives the *true* latitude, but the longitude, that great desideratum in nautical science—can only be ascertained with tolerable accuracy with a chronometer, and every ship ought to have one.

For ourselves, we felt that we were literally entering upon a "new world," and such were our sensations, such the reflections in which we indulged; and with such ardour and intensity of purpose did our imagination explore and re-open, as it were, to our view the lapse of ages, and the varied store of eventful circumstance since these trackless seas first bore the freighted vessel on their peaceful bosom, that we became identified with the period, as well as with the people, who undertook and achieved the bold adventure.

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CHAPTER VII.

DISCOVERY OF THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS—AN EXPOSITION OF THE ERRORS OF EARLY WRITERS—DISCOVERY OF SANTA CRUZ AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS.

"———— Venient annis
Secula seris, quibus oceanus
Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens
Pateat tellus, Typhisque novos
Delegat orbes, nec sit terris
Ultima Thule————"

Seneca, *Medæan Tragedy.*

THERE is something peculiarly interesting in carrying the mind back to the period when this beautiful archipelago lay buried from the knowledge of civilized man; when the intelligent mind of

"COLUMBUS, boast of science, boast of man!
Yet, by the great, the learned, and the wise,
Long held a visionary————"

first dispelled the mist of ignorance, which for ages had settled over it, and unveiled to the

admiration of the "*old* world" an enlarged channel for commerce to enrich herself with the hidden treasures of a *new* one.

In referring to the earliest particulars of this resplendent discovery, we are impressed with the interesting fact, that whilst the comprehensive mind of Columbus was resisting all the shocks which the prejudice and superstition of those who accompanied him, in his *first* voyage, could oppose to his further progress in search of the great object of his ambition, and at the time when he had been almost compelled to yield to their entreaties and their threats by returning to Spain, his little squadron had already passed far beyond the *eastern* boundary of the Caribbean archipelago, the earlier discovery of which, had he steered only a few degrees more to the *southward*, would probably have given a totally different direction to his subsequent researches, and perhaps have secured to him a less painful and unenviable termination to a long and eventful life [1].

[1] Columbus died at Valladolid, 20th May, 1506, aged about 65. His body was deposited in the convent of Saint Francisco, whence it was removed in 1513 to the Carthusian monastery, in

It was on the 8th of October, 1492, when the Admiral and his coadjutors, the *Pinzones*, were obliged to enter into an agreement with their crews, that they would return to Spain, in case land was not discovered in *three* days; and on the night of the 11th, they saw a light on *Watling's* island, one of the Lucayos, or *Bahamas*, at the moment when the time agreed upon between the Commanders and their crews for returning was about to expire [1]. On the following morning they

Seville; and afterwards in 1536 to the cathedral of the city of San Domingo, in Hispaniola, according to the request in his will. As recently as 1795, his ashes were again disturbed and conveyed thence, with considerable pomp, to the *Havannah*.

[1] This circumstance, given upon the authority of *Oviedo*, and other historians, has been contradicted by Mr. Irving, in his Life and Voyages of Columbus. "There is no authority," says he, "for such an assertion, either in the history of his son Fernando, or that of the Bishop Las Casas, each of whom had the admiral's papers before him; nor is it asserted by either Peter Martyr, or the Curate of Los Palacios, both cotemporaries and acquaintances of Columbus, and who could scarcely have failed to mention so striking a fact, if true." He admits, however, that in the evidence of one Pedro de Bilbao, in the memorable lawsuit between Don Diego, son of the Admiral, and the fiscal of the crown, it was stated that the witness heard many times, that some of the pilots and mariners wished to turn back, but that the "Admiral promised them presents, and entreated them to wait two or three days, before which time he should discover land," and such a stipulation,—rendered expedient by the mutinous disposition of

landed on an island which Columbus named *Saint Salvador*. The difference of longitude between this point and the eastern range of the Caribbean islands, which they had passed, is about 13 degrees, or 700 miles.

Availing himself of the information he afterwards received from the natives of Hispaniola, that there were islands to the southward and eastward, inhabited by their enemies the *Caribs*, and following the dictates of a speculative and comprehensive mind, Columbus, on his *second* voyage, steered in a more *southerly* direction than he had done before; and on the morning of *Sunday* the 3rd of November, 1493, (after a passage of twenty-one days from Ferro,) he discovered one of the islands of which we have spoken, and which retain the name of the *Caribbean* islands, after that of the savages who inhabited them, a race totally distinct in their general characteristics from the natives of *Hispaniola*, and the other islands to the westward

the crew, constantly fluctuating as atmospherical appearances, the flight of birds, and weeds floating on the surface, operated upon their minds:—does not invalidate the probability that he was determined to persevere in the voyage, in defiance of all dangers and difficulties.

of *Porto-Rico.* The island thus discovered was "so covered with trees that they could not see so much as an ell space of bare earth, or stony ground[1]." He named it "*Saint Domingo*" in compliment to the day on which it was discovered, or in the language of the *Church* "*Dominica,*" which latter appellation it has continued to retain[2].

[1] Vide Letter of Columbus to his Sovereigns.

[2] It has been very generally stated by writers on the West Indies, and as generally believed, that *Deseada,* the small island noticed in the last chapter, which lies to the northward and eastward of Guadaloupe, was the first land seen by Columbus in his *second* voyage, and thence called by him Deseada, or the *desired* land; as well by reason of his having had a tedious and perilous voyage, in which his crews had suffered many hardships, and had despaired of seeing land again. It is singular that the fact of the voyagers having had fine temperate weather, and a passage of only twenty-one days from Ferro, should not have pointed out this error at an earlier period; and equally strange, that so many respectable authorities should have perpetuated it, some of whom have gone so far as to affirm, that the discovery was made in the *first* voyage of Columbus to the new world. *Vide* "New Survey of the West Indies," by Thomas Gage, 4to. 1647, p. 17. "Purchase his pilgrimage," fol. 1614, p. 731. "History of the Caribbee Islands," by J. Davies, fol. 1666. p. 16. "Description of the New World" by John Ogilvie, fol. 1671. "L' Historie du noveau monde" par le Sieur Jean de Laet d'anuers. "North American Gazetteer." "Concise History of Spanish America," 1741. "Natural and civil History of the French Dominions in North and South America," by Thomas Jeffreys,

He afterwards in succession, and within a few days, discovered most of the other islands lying between Dominica and *Hispaniola*, whither he was proceeding to succour the new colony he had left on the preceding voyage. This extensive and magnificent island (called by the natives *Haité*) as well as Cuba, which were discovered within a few days after the first landing of the voyagers in this hitherto unknown region (unknown at least to civilized man,) at once opened a field for enterprise and adventure, which left the smaller islands of which we have spoken, as well as those in the immediate neighbourhood, unsettled and almost disregarded long after the period of their discovery.

The existence of a direct *western* route from

1760, &c. The conclusion we have come to upon this point is, that *Deseada* was discovered by Columbus, after leaving *Hispaniola*, on his *return* to Spain, in his second voyage in 1494; the theory of the *trade winds*, and the course of the currents, were at that time unknown, and instead of pursuing the route which experience and science have since pointed out, he attempted to make a direct course to the eastward, opposed by the prevailing wind and tempestuous weather, which ultimately compelled him to '*bear up*' for the islands, and he made *Deseada*, previously to anchoring at Guadaloupe, where he sought shelter.

Europe to India, the object which had first awakened the curiosity, and impelled the ambition of the great man who had projected and undertaken its development, was now supposed to be accomplished; and, as matter of course, a channel to the seat of its commerce and the repository of its reputed riches, was still considered plausible; and naturally led the progress of discovery and colonization in that direction which promised its consummation, as well as a larger field for the cupidity and industry of man to labour in[1]. The physical insignificance of the Caribbean islands in the scale of comparison, was not, however, of that decided character, to operate as a check to their becoming politically important, so much as

[1] The finding inhabitants in these islands, and especially a people possessing such peculiar characteristics as the *Caribs*, was less matter of surprise to Columbus and his companions, under the delusion that they had arrived at the eastern extremity of India, than might naturally have existed in their minds, had they been aware that they had entered upon a country as yet totally unknown, and which subsequently acquired the appropriate name of the "new world." Columbus, however, died in the belief that the island of *Cuba* was part of the continent of Asia, and consequently the eastern extremity of the Indies.

the ferocious and subtle disposition of their inhabitants; of whom may be said in the lines of *Juvenal:*

> "Aspicimus populos, quorum non sufficit iræ
> Occidisse aliquem; sed pectora, brachia, vultum
> Crediderint genus esse cibi—"

the force of which had been sufficiently manifested to the early visitors, as to inspire dread of further intercourse or collision with them[1]. It is worthy of remark, that at this period, any thing like a lucid or comprehensive development of the principles of philosophy was little known. Geographical and nautical science was as yet unborn, or in its infancy, and general knowledge was just awakening from that long night of ignorance which bigotry and superstition had produced, and it was so trammelled with theoretical absurdities and false doctrines, that

[1] *Johannes Pontæus* relates, that having put some of his laundresses on shore at *Guadaloupe* to wash some linen, the natives came suddenly from the woods, surprised and killed them without mercy, cutting them in pieces, and eating their broiled flesh hot from the coals; and Davies in his account of the *Caribby* islands, published in 1666, states that they had tasted of "all the nations that frequented them, and they affirm," says he, "that the French are the most *delicate*, and the Spaniards the hardest of digestion."—To which we say, *De gustibus non est disputandum.*

men moved in darkness or in doubt; the art of printing had only just beamed on the intellects of man, and to Columbus himself we owe the important discovery of the declension of the *magnetic needle*. The acquisition of wealth, and the exhaustless means which these newly discovered regions were supposed to possess, absorbed every other feeling; and Spain may be said to have shackled herself with chains of gold, presenting in the end a lamentable instance, among many others on the pages of history, of an empire's fall and degradation (like that of man,) by the acquisition and misapplication of unbounded wealth, at the instigation of ungovernable pride and inordinate ambition.

It is not, therefore, extraordinary that the exact situation, extent, and boundaries of her newly acquired territories were not ascertained, or clearly laid down on the charts, until long after they had been discovered; nor is it remarkable, that some doubt and misapprehension should have arisen, in the attempt to recognize those particular names which had been assigned to different places at the moment of their rising into political existence. There is nevertheless, greater discrepancy in

this respect as regards several of these islands, than is consistent with a proper examination of the accounts given by the voyagers, and by contemporary writers [1]. Referring our readers to that point of time, when Columbus in his *second* voyage discovered the Island of *Dominica*, and immediately afterwards *Guadaloupe*, where he anchored; we purpose following so much of his route on his way to Hispaniola, as will enable us more clearly to show,

[1] Much misconception has arisen from the circumstance of more than one settlement in these seas having the same name, as well as from more than one name being applied to the same settlement; for instance: the Island of Dominica was named by Columbus *San Domingo*, as well as a town built by the Spaniards in Haité, which has since been applied to the whole island, as well as the name of Espaniola given to it by the discoverer.

Barbadoes, Barbuda, and the Saints were at one time indiscriminately called *Barbata*.

There are two islands called *Anguilla*; one near Saint Martin's, the other among the Bahamas: and the Bahamas were formerly called *Lucayos*.

The name of *Santa Cruz* is also given to two islands, one near the Virgin Islands, another near Yucatan.

There is the island of *Tortuga* off Espaniola, the first principal rendezvous of the Pirates; *las Tortugas* near Margarita, and the *Tortugas* about a hundred miles north of the Havannah.

Porto Rico has borne the name of *Saint Juan*, as well as the Danish island, one of the Virgins, within sight of it.

Saint Christopher's is familiarly called Saint Kitts.

that the names of several of the islands he discovered in the intermediate distance, have been applied to other islands than those to which he assigned them, and which are still supposed to retain the designation given by him; and it is singular that the striking desideratum, namely, the great paucity of fresh water peculiar to one island, *Antigua*, has not at an earlier period pointed out the applicability of that name to the Island of *Saint Christopher*, coupled as it has been by many writers with the Indian name *Jamaica* or *Yamaca*, a word admitted to signify in the language of the aboriginals, an island abounding in springs.

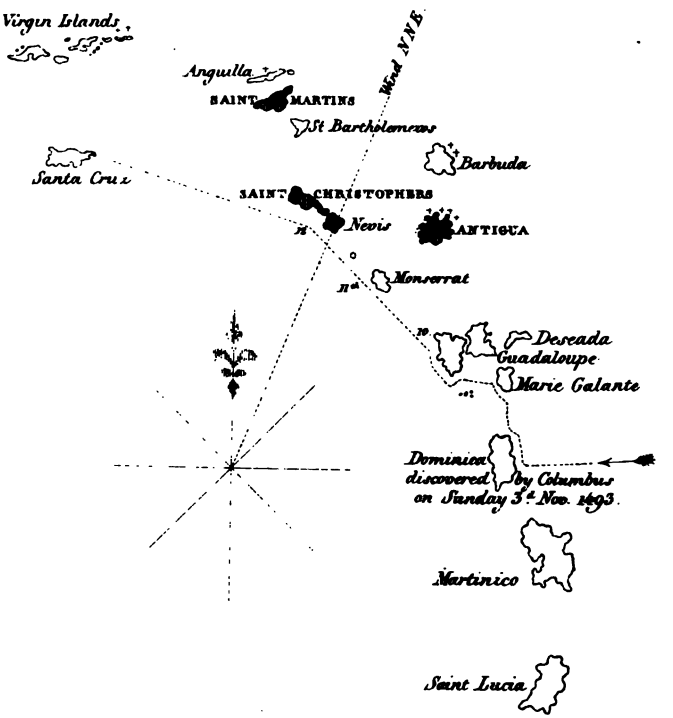
Referring to *Peter Martyr's* account of the discovery of the *Antilles* as the best authority, from his having been the contemporary and intimate acquaintance of Columbus, and from the familiar access he thereby had to original papers and journals in compiling his work, it appears that after leaving *Guadaloupe* on the tenth of November, "there appeared from the *north* a great island, which the *captives* called *Mantinino* or *Madanino*, which they could not approach by reason of the

north north-east wind[1]. After they had sailed by the space of *forty miles*, they passed not far from another island, this they called *Monserrat*. The day following (the eleventh), they saw another island, the which, because it was round, they called Santa Maria *Redonda*. The *next* day they found another, which they called *Saint Martin* (it being the eve of the festival of Saint Martin); likewise the third day they espied another, *whose diametrical side extending from the east to the west*, they judged to be a hundred and fifty miles; this last they called *Santa Maria de la Antigua*," &c. It may be here necessary to observe, that the term "next day," in the foregoing passage, implies that it was on the twelfth that the island called *Saint Martin* was discovered, instead of the eleventh, which is Saint Martin's day; but this trifling discrepancy in the statement might have arisen out of the method by which the voyagers may have kept their reckoning at the time. Be this as it may, the bearings of the "*great island*" called by the captives Mantinino,

[1] The captives here alluded to, were a few natives of Hispaniola, who had been taken to Spain by Columbus on his return in the first voyage, and brought back again, to recount to their countrymen the wonders they had beheld in civilized life.

and passed by Columbus, as we may infer, *without receiving from him any other name*, correspond exactly with the situation of the island now called Antigua, and it is scarce necessary to add, that there is no other island in that direction to dispute the position. "*Forty* miles," is about the distance from the north-west point of Guadaloupe to Monserrat, and the discovery of Redonda on the following day is equally correspondent with its situation and distance, allowing for the caution, curiosity, and consequent slow progress with which the voyagers proceeded. Both of these islands retain the names given to them by Columbus. It is then said they found *Saint Martin's*, but the island now so called, could scarcely have been seen at this distance, neither could the voyagers have shaped their course to it against a strong "*north north-east*" wind, and a *weather* current, and assuredly not without passing close to the *more important* islands of *Nevis* and *Saint Christopher*, whose names are not noticed, although it has been stated by most writers, that the great beauty and fertility of the latter island excited so much interest in the mind of Columbus, that he gave it his own name; and a passage in a

CHART
shewing the track of Columbus, after discovering Dominica in his second Voyage in November 1493.



Note *The Wind at N.N.E. would not permit the Voyagers to pass to Windward of St. Christophers. The track shewn in the Chart gives them a course within 6 points of the wind.*

Day & Haghe lith.

recent publication, (more remarkable for the propagation of the *pun* than for solving the problem,) expresses surprise that *Colon* did not make a *full stop* on its shores. The peculiar figure of this island, (resembling the form of a lute, or Turkish guitar,) and the direction of its shores, are clearly recognized in the passage "diametrical side extending from *east* to the *west*," &c. and its relative situation with the other islands mentioned; and the course which the voyagers must by necessity have steered, warrants the conclusion that the name "*Santa Maria de la Antigua*," was assigned to it by Columbus, and that *Nevis* received from him the name of *Saint Martin*. This will more clearly appear by reference to the annexed chart[1]. It is

[1] In the "Life and Voyages of Columbus," by Mr. Washington Irving, (a work abounding in interesting details respecting the early history of these islands,) a chart is given showing the tracks of the admiral in his four voyages to the West Indies, and his position at different dates. In compiling this Work, Mr. Irving had access to original documents lodged in the Archives at Madrid, and, to use his own words, he endeavoured "to ascertain the truth, amid those contradictions which will inevitably occur when several persons have recorded the same facts, viewing them from different points, and under the influence of different interests and feelings;" but that he was much confused at this point, by the ambiguity between the statements of the voyagers and the

worthy of remark, that the island now called *Saint Martin*, is said to have derived its name from that of the person who discovered or settled it some considerable time after the period to which we have been referring.

That Columbus, a man of great humility, and influenced in a powerful degree by a superstitious veneration for the Church, rather argues in favour of our position than that he should have given an island his own name, and at the same time have conferred upon himself the distinguishing title of canonization. In doing so, however, it is quite clear that some particular notice would have been taken of it at the time, whereas we have no mention made of St. Christopher or Nevis until long after the date of their discovery. Some authorities

names and situation of the islands as they are now recognized, is manifest, by his having carried the line of course between the tenth and the eleventh, *direct* to the island now called *Saint Martin*, without regard to the relative situation of the islands in the intermediate space, or the distance between the two points being greater than it was possible for the voyagers to effect within the time mentioned. "Continuing along this beautiful archipelago," says Mr. Irving, "he gave name to its islands as they successively rose to view—Monserrat, Santa Maria la Redonda, Santa Maria la Antigua, and San Martin." Nevis and Saint Christopher are not mentioned.

have attributed the name of Saint Christopher to the singular form of its highest mountain, called Mount Misery, which has been thought to resemble the figure of that saint with the infant Jesus on his back, and others have attributed the resemblance to the devil carrying the saint on his shoulders.

Referring now to the authority of Ferdinand Columbus, the son and historian of the Admiral, we find that the Indian name of *Antigua*, was *Jamaica* or *Yamaca*, as already noticed; "a word," says Mr. Bryan Edwards, "which, in the language of the larger islands, signified a country *abounding in springs*, and therefore remarkable," says he, "that it should have been applied to an island in which *springs, rivulets, and fresh water, are no where to be found.*" He is, however, confessedly speaking of the island *now* called Antigua, but Ferdinand Columbus was evidently alluding to the island which in the present day bears the name of *Saint Christopher*, and which *is* remarkable for its numerous springs, and a superabundant supply of excellent water. Ferdinand Columbus accompanied his father in his fourth voyage, and after the death of the admiral, he is said to have made two voyages

to the new world. In 1526 he was engaged by the Spanish government to correct the charts of the West Indies. The Indian name of Saint Christopher, according to other authorities, was *Liamniga*, the fertile island, a word which admits of nearly the same sound as *Jamaica*, and is no doubt of the same derivation, their signification being nearly synonymous; independent of the fact that the language of the Indians had a considerable diversity of dialect. That the name of *Saint Christopher* was ultimately given to the island in compliment to the discoverer, there is no reason to doubt, and it is equally probable that the name of Antigua was subsequently transferred to the island called *Mandanino*, or *Matinino*, a name which in our opinion was applied by the natives of *Hispaniola* to all the islands inhabited by their common enemies the *Caribs;* an opinion which we found upon the repeated use of the word by the natives, during the sojourn of Columbus in that island, in his first voyage, when speaking of, or pointing in different *south-easterly* directions to the country of their enemies, of the precise character or locality of which they appeared to have no distinct notion. There is no doubt, the

island of *Martinico* or *Martinique*, the great strong hold of that ferocious race, derived its present name from the same source.

Pursuing their course to Hispaniola, after discovering the islands we have mentioned, the island of *Santa Cruz*, called by the natives Ayay, rose up before the voyagers, and they also discovered a cluster of islands, which Columbus named "the Virgins" in honour of the eleven thousand Virgins of the legend in the Romish ritual.

CHAPTER VIII.

PHYSICAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS—NEVIS—SAINT CHRISTOPHER'S—THE DEVIL AND THE SAINT—PACKETS.

"Amidst the heaven-reflecting ocean, smiles
A constellation of Elysian isles."

Montgomery.

In contemplating the physical position of the West Indian archipelago, the Caribbean sea may be regarded as an extensive bay, and the several islands, as representing a combined fleet of different nations, ranged in a *curved* line of defence, at the confluence of the Atlantic. *Columbus* and many later authorities, including *Humboldt*, have entertained the hypothesis that the continents of the two Americas were formerly joined, or of nearer contiguity, in the direction of these islands, by the connection of them one to another; the

Caribbean sea being an immense lake or *mediterranean*: or as Columbus imagined, part of the main continent, which had been worn away, and inundated by the constant operation of the currents on its borders, gradually producing that fringe of islands which stretches from *Trinidad* to the Bahamas. In support of this opinion he notices the form of these islands, being narrow from north to south, and extending in length from east to west, in direction of the currents which issue through the gulf of Paria, from the vast rivers of the Orinoco; and Humboldt designates them "an ancient chain of mountains, broken by the action of the currents, earthquakes, and volcanoes." Opinions have been promulgated in favour of a conclusion at variance with this theory, and which appear to have been founded upon philosophical investigation, by authorities of no mean consideration.—Moreau de Jonnes, speaking of the *Antilles*, is of opinion that they are of more recent formation, than the two continents, and that they have been produced by the action of volcanic fire, conjointly with a principle of organization similar to that so remarkable in the

structure of some of the islands in the Pacific Ocean; namely, by a submarine eruption raising, in the first instance, masses of volcanic matter from the bottom of the sea, which have continued for a period as a shoal, a short way below the surface of the water, and serving as a foundation on which the *madreporites* and other marine animals have commenced their superstructure; accounting, at the same time, for those beds of recent coralline limestone which cover the volcanic matter in many of these islands. His observations have reference more particularly to the windward part of the Caribbean range; and his theory, in one sense, appears peculiarly applicable to the island of Antigua and a portion of Guadaloupe, and in its general application to those islands of a more mountainous and decidedly volcanic character, which probably started into existence by one violent convulsion of the earth's surface, forming immense strata of many hundred feet above the sea, and over which forests and luxuriant vegetation now bloom in perpetual verdure. These several islands have been divided by another French geologist into four classes;

The first of these includes such as consist partly of primitive (or to speak more correctly, of the more ancient) rock formations, and partly those derived from volcanoes.

The second, those which are wholly volcanic.

The third, those entirely calcareous; and

The fourth, such as are partly of volcanic origin, and partly composed of limestone, with organic remains.

To the *first* of these classes, TRINIDAD, which lies nearest and almost contiguous to the Spanish main.

Of the *second* class, which consists exclusively of volcanic rocks, the following is a summary, commencing with the most southern.

First. GRENADA, an extinct crater filled with water, boiling springs, basalts, between the districts of Saint George's and Goave.

Second. SAINT VINCENT, an active volcano, called Le Souffrière, the loftiest mountain in the chain which runs through the island.—It first threw out lava in 1718, but its most tremendous eruption was in 1812, when there issued from the mountain so dreadful a torrent of lava, and such clouds of

ashes, as nearly covered the island, and injured the soil in a manner which it has never yet recovered. The total ruin of the City of Caraccas, preceded this explosion by thirty-five days, and violent oscillations of the ground were felt both in the islands, and on the coasts of terra firma[1].

Third. SAINT LUCIA, contains a very active solfatara, from 12 to 1400 feet in height.—Besides a considerable condensation of sulphur given out from the crevices, jets of hot water likewise take place which fill periodically certain small basins, like the geysers of Iceland.

Fourth. MARTINIQUE, can hardly be said to belong to this class; for limestone is seen resting upon the volcanic products; the latter, however, constitutes the fundamental rock throughout the whole island, and forms three principal hills, called *Vauclin*, the paps of Carbet, consisting of felspathic lava, which are the most elevated summits in the whole of this series of islands, and *Montagne pelée.* Between the first and second of these is found, in a neck of land, a tract composed of ancient

[1] Humboldt's Per. Narrative, vol. iv. page 26.

basalts, called *La Roche Carrée.* Hot springs at *Prêcheur* and *Lamentin.*

Fifth. DOMINIQUE, is completely composed of volcanic matter, but the action is extinct.

Sixth. GUADALOUPE, may be divided into two parts, according to its physical structure. The first, properly called Guadaloupe, consists entirely of volcanic rocks, and therefore belongs to this division of our subject. The second, named Grande Terre is *calcareous,* consisting of shelly limestone, covered by a bed of clay, and containing rolled masses of lava. The volcanic part of the island contains *fourteen* ancient craters, and one in a state of present activity. The eruption of 1797 took place from an elevation of 4800 feet: pumice, ashes, and clouds of sulphureous vapours were then ejected; the particulars are given in the report made to the French government, on the state of the volcano in 1797, by Mon. Amie.

Seventh. MONSERRAT, a solfatara; fine porphyritic lavas, with large crystals of felspar, and hornblende, near Galloway, often much decomposed by the sulphureous exhalations.

Eighth. NEVIS, a solfatara.

Ninth. SAINT CHRISTOPHER, a solfatara, at Mount Misery.

Tenth. SAINT EUSTATIA. The crater of an extinguished volcano surrounded by pumice.

The third class, comprehends the islands of Margarita, Desirade, Curaçoa, Bonaire, and in general all the islands of low elevation: they consist entirely of limestone, of very recent formation.

The fourth class, partly composed of volcanic products, and partly of shelly limestone, comprises the islands of *Antigua, Saint Bartholomew, Saint Martin, and Saint Thomas.*

It may be observed that such islands as exhibit traces of the recent action of fire, are all situated in a line on the eastern boundary of the range, from north latitude 12° to 18°, and west longitude 61° to 63°. Whatever indications of the kind occur further to the west, belong to eruptions of an older date [1].

During the night we passed slowly through the channel between Antigua and Guadaloupe, and when the morning "ope'd her golden gates" we found ourselves at no great distance from the

[1] Cortes Journal de physique.

island of *Nevis*, bearing north by east, whose conical mountain was partially concealed by light floating clouds; but as soon as the sun walked out to greet us, robed in all the winning majesty of his court-day attire, the vagrant vapours and misty exhalations of the night, dispersed, and left the vault of heaven in one capacious smile upon his progress. The high land of *Saint Christopher* was indistinctly seen in the background to the left.

We run close in shore, making the southern extreme of the island, on which stands a battery for the protection of the town, and the shipping at the anchorage. Charlestown, the capital, and indeed the only town in the island, is prettily ranged along a white sandy beach, and with its cocos and tamarinds, and other favorites of the tropical Dryades, yields a delicious repast to the wearied sight after six weeks' voyaging over many horizons. The deep grey shadows of morning twilight, which for awhile had concealed the details of the upland scenery, gradually passed away as the sun ascended in all his glory behind the summit of the central mountain, tinging the rugged

edges of the crater with his golden beams, and giving the effect, for a time, of a raging volcano: and the cultivated plains beneath rising in beautiful harmony on a gentle concave acclivity from the sea to the base of the cone, were instantaneously called into life, and light, and brightness. As we passed rapidly along the shores, various transformations followed: the island lost its conical form as two or three hills opened behind the central mountain, and the lands of Saint Christopher, whose vicinity to Nevis gave them the appearance of one island, till we opened the narrow channel which separates them, were fast developing beauties of a more varied and transcendant character, changing their position and features in succession, to introduce others to our view, like a moving panorama of the most artful design and imposing effect. The wild and sterile appearance of the immediate foreground, which the southern extremes of Saint Christopher present, gives increased interest to the beautiful association of light and shade, and harmony of outline, which characterize its more general details.

The man who could travel from *Dan* to *Beer-*

Saint Christophers

sheba, and declare it all barren, must inevitably have felt a taste for the picturesque germinating within him, peradventure he had eyes wherewith to behold this little *chef d'œuvre* of nature's modelling; and we venture to predict that it would not be rejected by a committee of Somerset House academicians, even *without* a very *gorgeous frame* to recommend it to the public.

> "Not Grecian Tempé, where arcadian Pan,
> Knit with the Graces, tun'd his sylvan pipe,
> While mute attention hush'd each charmed rill;
> Not purple Enna, whose irriguous lap,
> Strew'd with each fruit of taste, each flow'r of smell,
> Sicilian Proserpine, delighted, sought;
> Can vie, bless'd isle, with thee.——"

Dr. Grainger was a native of the island, and he was moreover a man of capacious mind, and a poet withal[1].

We were now in the very track, as near as possible in the precise situation of Columbus, when he beheld from his *caraval*, with more than human exultation and delight, this "precious stone set

[1] The author of a clever, and to the West Indian reader, a very interesting poem, called the "Sugar Cane," from which we have quoted.

in the silver sea," and we marvel not at the fervour of his admiration, or the florid luxuriance of his description, in his attempt to convey to his sovereigns, a comprehensive idea of the magnificent scenery of these 'fertile regions.' A pictorial sketch, devoid of the elementary influences which nature, in these ardent and ever varying climes, breathes over every object, is a caricature of the worst description.

The evidences of history testify, that when civilization reached the shores of the "new world," *misery* made a lodgment there; and, as if to commemorate the event, and associate it with the name of him who first broke through the barriers to discovery, a monument bearing the Demon's name rears its mighty crest above the ridge of a capacious crater in the centre of the island of Saint Christopher [1].

We have already noticed that several writers on the West Indies have attributed the name of this island either to the resemblance which the form of Mount Misery bears to the figure of the Saint,

[1] Mount *Misery* stands 3711 feet from the surface of the sea, exceeding the height of the Table Mountain at the Cape of Good Hope, which, according to Horsburg, is 3500 feet.

with the infant Jesus on his back, or to the Saint being borne on the shoulders of the Devil. We could not detect in any of its forms or outlines the least correspondence with those features, either of the saint or the sinner, which the best authorities among their contemporaries and acquaintances have assigned to them; and we concluded that Lucifer, who delights in puzzling mankind with hyperbole, and transformations, might have altered the shape of the mountain to prevent dispute, and to afford the imagination of all who look at it an opportunity of giving it any other form they please. The omniformity of Satan, which, by the way, has been proved by persons of both sexes, to a degree little inferior to mathematical evidence, might have caused embarrassment in the attempt to find resemblance to him, but the figure and vast physical power of Saint Christopher have been established upon a basis as incontrovertible as any record in the *fasti magni* of the Romans; even by the evidence of his own jaw-bone, which, according to *Torquemada*, who had seen it, corresponds in proportion with the height of a man as tall as the Tower of Segovia: and at Venice, may be seen,

among other inestimable relics, a "well authenticated" tooth of the saint, and one of his ribs, as big as that of a small whale. The prince of darkness hath a pair of shoulders that are marvellously broad, to bear half the load occasionally imposed upon them; but we arrive at a clearer estimate of his strength, by contemplating him in the act of carrying so weighty a personage.

The Venus was brought to an anchor, and the departure of the packet which had arrived from England, proceeding on her way to Saint Thomas, caused us hastily to sever the social chain which had been wrought in the voyage, and to embark in her for our destination. In those days the route of the Leeward Island packet was differently regulated to the plan now followed: she then remained at Barbadoes, the first island she touched at, during two days, and the like period at the different colonies between that point, (commencing with Saint Lucia,) and Saint Thomas, whence she departed for England, carrying with her the return mails. She now proceeds forthwith to the several islands in the route, leaving the outward mails, without anchoring, until she arrives at Saint Thomas; and

a mail boat follows her from Barbadoes with the return mails from each colony, two days after her departure from thence, thereby affording the crew of the packet greater relaxation from their labours. The means of communication between the islands, is increased by the mail boats calling at them in their return to windward: they are mostly schooner-rigged, well-built vessels, from ninety to a hundred and fifty tons burthen.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GIBRALTAR OF THE WEST INDIES—THE VIRGIN ISLANDS—TORTOLA—ROAD TOWN—PICTURE OF DESOLATION—A SKETCH FOR CRUICKSHANK—EFFECTS OF A RECENT HURRICANE—PEDESTRIAN PAGE—ANDERSON'S LEAP—MOUNT HEALTHY—A THUNDER-STORM—DUTCH NIGHTINGALES—SNAKES AND LIZARDS.

"Thus all the night they stem the liquid way,
And end their voyage with the morning ray."

Odyssey.

We left the bay of Basseterre in the evening, and passed close in shore along the southern coast of the island. Before sunset, we were abreast of the fortress of "Brimstone-hill," which stands in an isolated position, between the interior chain of mountains and the coast; a post of sufficient natural and artificial strength, to have acquired the name of the "*Gibraltar* of the West Indies." The Dutch islands of *Saint Eustatia* and *Saba* were now open before us, the former rising from the

ocean in the form of a decacuminated cone, and showing the rugged ridge of its crater;

SAINT EUSTASIA.

The extremes bearing from N. W. by W. to N. W. by N.

and the highest land of the islands of Saint Bartholomew and Saint Martin appeared to the right, in long irregular forms on the horizon's verge, having the semblance of a number of small islets and rocks.

The breeze having slackened in the night, it was noon on the following day, before the land in the direction of the "*Virgin Islands*" was seen; and about two in the afternoon, we obtained a distinct view of the Virgin Gorda, and other small islands of the group, between which we were to pass to arrive at Tortola, which now faintly appeared in the background. The passage was effected in about an hour afterwards; and another hour brought us off the "*Road Town*," which is situated on the south side of the island, in the western bight of a deep bay. It consists of only

one long irregular street, which takes a curve at the base of a projecting point of land, close to the water's edge. The interior mountains, which run from one extremity of the island to the other, rise in abrupt and irregular forms in the back-ground, presenting patches of cultivation of various shapes, on the acclivities.

The person to whom we were consigned, resided on the opposite side of the island, shut out from a view of the town and harbour by the intervening mountains; but by means of a signal-post, he could ascertain when a ship arrived, and by the time we debarked, a horse was in readiness for us on the beach, with a young *nigger* in attendance to conduct us to his *chateau.* All this was well enough; but the aspect of things before us on landing, was cheerless and soul-depressing in the extreme, and produced a certain revulsion in our animal economy, which, for the time, pre-disposed us for all the *endemics* and *epidemics* in Christendom. The town, if it might be so called, was the very epitome of desolation and misery; and the sample of its inhabitants, whom curiosity, rather than employment, had brought to the beach, appeared to have

been trained up expressly to support the "keeping" of the picture. It is seldom that man is without some redeeming item in the sum of his miseries; and often when the mind is sore and wearied, or painfully excited, he takes refuge in the miseries of others, and in bitterness of spirit finds relief even in ludicrous associations. We have already shown that such had been the case with ourselves, but we believe it often happens, even with men of the most saturnine tempers; and we therefore confess, that we should have been destitute of all taste for *picturesque* or *burlesque*, if we had not, fagged and wearied as we were, regarded with peculiar *goût* two or three persons in the group before us, who by their bearing more than by their attire, seemed to claim superiority over those in the rear ranks of the assemblage. Their contrast was whimsical in the extreme; and they might have been taken for *lay*-figures grouped by that inimitable artist, Cruickshank, in preparation for a sketch. One was Quixotically tall, thin, long-limbed, and *angular* in his form; whilst another, who stood by his side, as if ambitious of the contrast, was equally conspicuous for abounding in curved lines. He had

somewhat the appearance of a sallad incorporator *reversed*, or of a conjunction of *circles* doing penance in "*tights*." A third was equally remarkable for his proportions being at variance with the "*line of beauty*," as well as by the construction of his trowsers; and he seemed to have adopted for convenience, what we had on a former occasion effected by chance—by putting them on with the hinder part in front.

Besides these singular personages, there were not more than twenty or thirty persons to be seen, of all ages, colours, and sexes, including a few noisy children in *puris naturalibus*, bathing in the shallow waters, whose voices alone broke the solemn stillness of the place, whilst echo answered from the adjacent hills, and two or three lank *cat-hammed*

pigs wallowing in filth, (as if to gainsay the reputation of West Indian pork) unconsciously gave their aid to the pictorial *ensemble.*

Notwithstanding the day was on the decline, and the broad shadows of the interior mountains threw a sort of artificial twilight over the town, the heat was excessive, and appeared to pervade every thing. The dilapidated and decayed appearance of the houses, standing amidst ruins, and the complexion of the people, irresistibly suggested the idea that we were in the regions of the "Fire-king," and that every thing was under the process of baking: the *white* inhabitants, for instance, by far the smallest portion, might be said to be in a state of preparation for the ordeal; the *mulattoes* looked about *half-done;* and the *negroes* nearly burnt to a *cinder;* whilst the paucity of their collective number, accounted for those who had been already swept away after decomposition. This might have been monstrous agreeable to a man ambitious of *promotion;* but for ourselves we could have submitted to be cashiered and drummed out of the place, and the society we were about to mix with, and in our heart we envied the captain of the packet, who quitted

the shore as soon as he had delivered the mail. So great, indeed, had been our surprise and mortification on landing, that we scarce heeded the information, that a recent hurricane had been the chief cause of the desolation and misery around us. The *cause*, which had ceased to exist, was too much blended with the *effects* it had produced, to admit of our giving it any distinct recognition in aggravation of calamities, which from early association appeared to us local, and incidental to the climate and to the country: and we intuitively reverted to the *anti-colonial* records on the "tablet of our memory," which not only reminded us that we were in the "birth-place" of hurricanes, earthquakes, and tornados, but that we had, by some mischance, actually got into their *nursery*.

"*Mount Healthy*," was, however, to be the place of our sojourn, and the name was sufficiently spirit-stirring, to lodge us at once in the saddle, and to promote our immediate departure from this *puppet-show* chaos. We were now in the situation to enjoy those exquisite sensations which every traveller must feel after a voyage, whether for the limited period of Jonah's aquatic excursion

with the whale, attended with the dispatch of steam locomotion, the security of safety valves and land in sight; or to a spot

"Where half the convex world intrudes between,"

with the interruption of variable winds, calms, storms, and traverse courses, cribbed, cabined and confined, and perhaps limited to three steps and a turn, like a caged tiger, on board a vessel dependent for her progress upon canvas and a favorable breeze. We had, however, received a shock for which we were by no means prepared, and the staggering conviction that we were now in a land of slavery, marred the immediate cause of gratulation. Giving the rein to the horse, and to our imagination at the same moment, we travelled about a mile on a tolerable road, with cane fields on either side, flanked by the sea to the right and the mountains to the left, pricking our ears, as we went, for the sound of the cart-whip and the cries of the oppressed—but as yet we heard them not. The road now terminated in two *bridle* paths at the bottom of a ravine, and we were puzzled which to choose; nor did we think of our sable guide, until the urchin, bursting with intelli-

gence like a pod of cotton, broke silence by exclaiming, "*Massa, him de wrang way:*" and he instructed us to pursue the one which followed the course of a deep gully, whose sides became more and more precipitous as we proceeded. It suddenly occurred to us that the boy's presence was somewhat unaccountable, considering the pace we had travelled, which scarce admitted of his keeping up with us by running, and he showed no signs of breathless fatigue; and we at once bethought ourselves of the marvellous pedestrian page in the "Lay of the last Minstrel," who travelled twice as fast as his master's galloway. We had no sooner pushed forward again, upon a more open and beaten track, than upon looking backward we discovered our little "Flibbertigibbet" at the end of the horse's tail, the animal quite reconciled to a liberty which habit, as it appeared, had imposed upon him.

The path still lay along the bottom of the ravine, or water-course, and we soon found ourselves in a spot of peculiar beauty, especially to the eyes of one, who had been so long accustomed to the monotonous uniformity of the ocean; and the interest of

the scene was materially heightened by the presence of five or six negro women, who had been engaged in washing clothes in the shallow stream which meandered through the irregular courses of the ravine, and were now preparing to depart for their homes. Their voices had caught our ear, and "the loud laugh proclaimed the vacant mind," some time before we reached the spot. On approaching them we stopped to witness the *fun*, which consisted of a *splashing* battle between two strapping wenches, whose white cotton gowns were gathered up at the waist, so as to give fair play to two pair of legs, which Vestris might have envied for their proportions. Their companions, as they gathered the linen from their drying places, the adjacent bushes or large stones, were inciting them to continue the conflict, and "Laughter holding both her sides," was admirably personated by an old damsel in the group, who sat like an Indian princess on a large granite stone, which in colour and appearance might have been taken for a young elephant *couchant*. As they relaxed in their mirth, their attention was directed to ourselves, and we were

soon saluted with "How d'ye, Massa?—how you do, sar?—you cum fra Englan'?—I wash you clothes, Massa, I do 'em well?" &c., and echo joined in the salutation. The scene was altogether novel, tropical, and moreover, extremely imposing; and having thanked the sable *Naiades* for their compliments, we proceeded on our route up the valley, in better humour with ourselves and the natives. The spot merits a better name than "Huntum's Gut." Advancing about a mile further, we made an acute angle out of the ravine, and continued a traverse course on one of its sides, sufficiently steep and abrupt in the turnings, to demand more than ordinary regard to the safety of one's neck; and our page materially heightened the interest of our situation, by hanging on the horse's tail, threatening every moment a retrograde movement to the animal and ourselves.

At one spot we felt a rise within us far from agreeable, owing to the vicinity of a precipice almost perpendicular, which led to the bottom of the ravine we had left, and which we afterwards heard was called "Anderson's leap," or some such name,

in commemoration of a person having landed at the bottom *without* breaking his neck. Had he been *killed*, his fame had probably died with him. We at length reach the head of the valley at a point called "Ruthy Hill," and here the sea appeared on either side.

The heat had gradually decreased, and the air had become more rarified as we proceeded, and on attaining this height we were irresistibly impelled to stop, as well for the purpose of enjoying the cool breezes which were passing in refreshing currents up the valley, as to contemplate the country through which we had passed in our ascent from the town; and notwithstanding the repulse our predilections for the picturesque had received upon landing, they were at least sufficiently recovered, to recognise the sublime supremacy of nature over her coadjutor art, and to remind us that, ——

"God made the country—Man the town."

The *capital* of Tortola, viewed from this point through the intervening distance, and associated with the surrounding scenery, is certainly seen to the greatest advantage, like an exceeding plain

woman with her face veiled, and commanding attention with the aid of dress. We here witnessed one of those sudden atmospheric changes, and singular combinations of light and shade, which not unfrequently occur in the tropics. The clear bright sky and calm sea to windward of the island in the direction of the town, had, in the interval of our landing and gaining this point, become darkened with threatening clouds, which added to the gloom already cast over this side of the island by the shadows of the mountains, thrown by the sun setting in the opposite direction. Only a narrow ridge where we stood, separated the two divisions of light and shade: on one side, the depths of evening had closed on every object in the route we had pursued: on the other, the declining sun, still several degrees above the horizon, continued to dispense warmth and light over that we were pursuing. Our imagination was at issue with our stomach, or we might have attempted an *allegory*, and personated the man in the moon during an eclipse, or Hercules looking over the confines of the earth, to see what was going on at the *antipodes*.

We proceeded by a less intricate route, and with a gradual descent on a hill-side, running laterally from the interior mountain range towards the sea, planted with sugar-canes, but they were yet too young to be recognised by a novice as any thing but a large species of grass; and the palpable poverty of the soil, scarce justified the labour which had been bestowed in the cultivation, and in placing rows of stones on the declivities to retain it on the surface. We had looked anxiously during the journey for a gang of negroes at work, but, with the exception of the land near the town, the immediate country we had passed through was either uncultivable, or in a fallow state; a considerable portion bearing the sinuosities which tillage had formed at no very distant period, and the ruins of sugar-works, partly explained the cause of its abandonment.

The works and dwelling at Mount Healthy, appeared about half-way on the descent towards the sea, possessing a commanding and cheerful situation, sheltered by the surrounding eminences, and one which fairly entitles it to the designation it bears. On our arrival at the spot, we were received

by our host, to whom we were personally a stranger, in a spirit of true tropical warmth; an exordium as essential to a good dinner, upon a first introduction, as my Lord Blaney would consider three dozen of oysters, at least: and we had the additional satisfaction of finding that the cook had proceeded in his culinary operations, with the strictest regard to our progress over the hills, and the time when we should arrive, so as to produce a *denouement* in our several operations, as nearly as possible at the same moment. It is really pity that a greater reciprocity of feeling and cordial co-operation of purpose, is not more generally encouraged between the provider of a repast and the consumer of it—the fault seldom lies with the former; and, perhaps, there is no employment, trade, or calling, in which a man may be supposed to exert himself more to gratify the tastes and inclinations of those for whom he labours than that of a cook—and none, whose results are so often treated with *cold* indifference; "they manage these things better in France," where an unity of purpose between the cook and the stomach is always supposed to exist, and the greediest gluttony becomes a virtue in proportion to the accord-

ance of the compact. In the present instance, the quantity and perfection of the edibles and potables before us we exquisitely adjusted, and we had nearly effected that perfect harmony and equipoise between the *material*, and *immaterial* being, which the science of gastronomy is so happily calculated to promote; when the clouds, which had been congregating to windward for the purpose, as it appeared, of taking in water for their voyage, very unceremoniously announced their arrival over our heads by unloading their cargoes, following an *electric* shock, which reverberated to the island's extremities; and, judging from the splashing about our ears, they were probably that particular species of cloud, which the learned *Polonius* has classed among the cetaceous tribe of fishes, from its resemblance to a *whale;* although, from the artificial spirit which has hitherto prevailed in ichthyology, its comparative organization with the *electric*-eel has not yet been clearly ascertained: be this as it may, they were exceeding wroth, but their violence was soon over, and, unlike the temper of our English clouds, which congregate in sulkiness, and look ill-tempered for a month, in half an hour all was fair again;—the windows were

re-opened, a breeze came down from the mountains, "like the sweet south stealing over a bed of violets," and the "Dutch nightingales" *croaked* their evening song,

"Garrula limois Rana coax at aquis."

Providence, in the distribution of her favours, has so equitably balanced their relative importance to each of her creatures, that in conferring the most gorgeous plumage upon the feathered inhabitants of the tropics, she has partially withheld from them the gift of song, for the less beautiful of the species of other climes[1]. Hence the frog, the snake, the lizard, and the cricket, each of which have no doubt their own peculiar benefits and blessings, here emulate Philomela's glory, and n harmonious concert,

"Sing their wild notes to the listening waste;"

unless, indeed, feeling their comparative degrada-

[1] An opinion is too commonly entertained, that among the tropical birds, there are no songsters, but this is an error; the southern continent of America abounds with birds of beautiful plumage, and great power of song. The troupiale, the red-headed finch, two species of the wren, several of the thrush and linnet, pour forth sweet and varied strains in the forest wilds.

tion, they merely call for justice, and demand of Jupiter another king.

To a person first arriving in the country, the sound of these nocturnal minstrels is peculiarly discordant and annoying. In full concert, they might well be imagined a legion of devilkins labouring hard at knife-grinding, the occasional shrill note (or whistle) of the lizard, or snake, representing the screech of a wheel wanting grease, and the frogs, which are most active in the performance, are always more vigorous in the display of their powers about the period of rain. It is nevertheless remarkable, how soon one becomes reconciled or indifferent to their noise, as well as to the equally disagreeable scream of the Guinea-fowl. They certainly succeeded for a night or two in interrupting our repose, and curtailing it of its fair proportion; for, as soon as the first named little gentry had retired to rest at daybreak, the others commenced their labours with their incessant call for "*port-wine, port-wine, port-wine.*" And a yelping cur in the neighbourhood thought proper to throw in the *bark* most liberally, as a necessary accompaniment, to drive us *into* a fever.

CHAPTER X.

REFLECTIONS—A PLANTER'S DWELLING—THE CONDEMNATION OF BETSY—A DEVILED SWEETBREAD—PEACOCKS' BRAINS—NAMING OF ANIMALS—NEGROES' HOUSES—SUGAR WORKS—JOE VAN-DYKES—AN ESCAPE—CUTTING THE SUGAR CANES.

"Oh, then, I see, Queen Mab hath been with you."

Romeo and Juliet.

THE restlessness we experienced for a few nights, was not wholly attributable to such ephemeral causes as the croaking of frogs or the screech of the Guinea-fowl; but reverting more particularly to the first evening after our arrival, when the mind was powerfully excited by the sudden transelementation from an aqueous to a terrestrial existence, and by the vivid impressions which every new object was calculated to make on its retina: it readily yielded to the influence which the statements we had heard respecting the country and the people so irresistibly promoted. As yet, ocular demonstration had no opportunity to establish

conviction, and we became lost in a labyrinth of speculation and conjecture. We retired to rest early, but not to sleep. We could not divest ourselves of the feeling that every thing about us was strange, and that we were surrounded by strangers, by a community of persons whose character, feelings, and habits were equivocal, and of whom report had whispered unwelcome things; the bare thought that we were immediately surrounded by several hundred persons of savage origin, and as yet uncivilized, and kept in a state of slavish subjection and tyrannous oppression, by two or three intolerant task-masters, although at variance with the total absence of all apparent precaution on the part of the latter, against revolt or individual temerity; still produced a feeling of insecurity and apprehension which we could not altogether overcome. We were ignorant of the feelings which might exist between the master and his slaves,—of the principles by which the *one* might be influenced in governing the multitude, but it was not possible to be insensible of the anomalies which existed among several hundreds of a people whose physical organization was a problem, and whose moral standard was at variance

with that of all civilized societies. A possibility was also suggested, that our presence and immediate arrival from England might promote a rupture, should disaffection exist among them; or perhaps theft might be attempted and practised with impunity on a person as yet a stranger among them, and who knew nothing of the localities of his domicile. It is no marvel, therefore, that our attention should have been directed to the extreme simplicity and insecurity of the dwelling, which consisted merely of one floor, composed of a frame-work in the form of a *parallelogram*, *clap-boarded* at the sides and extremities, and with the ordinary span roof planked and covered with small pieces of wood called *shingles*[1]. The interior was divided, as high as the cross-beams, into three compartments, one occupying nearly half the area, which was designated "the hall," and appropriated to the ordinary daily purposes of drawing and dining-room; the other two

[1] Shingles are thin oblong pieces of wood from twelve to eighteen inches in length, and about six inches in breadth, answering in their application the purpose of slates, for which they might be taken by a novice, from their being placed on the roofs of the houses in the same manner, and usually coloured to resemble them. They are imported from America.

served as sleeping rooms, each having communication with the other, as well as access and egress by a door opening on a stone pavement on which the whole fabric stood, and which also supported an open gallery or corridor projecting about four feet from the roof. The fastenings of the doors and window-shutters consisted only of iron hooks, which corresponded with eyes in the sill or frame-work, and which served to keep them closed without the intention of security. The floor was planked, but without carpeting, and the articles of furniture were such as necessity and convenience required, rather than such as elegance or caprice might have suggested. A common hall lamp was suspended from one of the centre beams; on one side of the room stood a small mahogany sideboard, bearing such articles of plate and glassware as were in use, the two ends of a dining-table forming a circle, stood in the centre, and the other portion of it occupied a position on one side, to wait occasions which might require accommodation for a larger party; a few cherry-tree chairs completed the arrangement.

Coming from a land of freedom, from the vortex of civilization and refinement, where the exercise

of every social prerogative is tolerated and encouraged, to a land of slavery and arbitrary power; it was scarce possible we could refrain from launching into a sea of speculation. "Can it be, that a system so degrading to humanity exists? is it possible that so many of our fellow-creatures are kept in a state of heathenish irreligion, and abject slavery, only by the terror of the whip, and the intolerant self-will of one man? and that that man can thus retire to his bed unguarded and unprotected from the well-merited vengeance of his persecuted dependants?"

With such thoughts we passed a restless and almost sleepless night; and when at length drowsiness had overcome us, and we sunk into a feverish repose, we were still haunted with visions of fearful aspect, —of whips, and chains, and deeds of blood!

It was broad daylight when, with our eyes wide open, we were in doubt whether we were awake, or whether the words we could indistinctly hear, were not an illusion correspondent with the import and general tenor of our dreams; we were soon satisfied of the fact, by clearly recognizing the voice of our host in the adjoining room, speaking in an under

tone, and in evident displeasure; the name of *Betsy* transpired, and the words "*run away*" were also distinct, but the sentence was partially lost. We now remembered that after dinner the preceding evening, a woman of that name had been reported guilty of burning her house down, and had been locked up as a punishment. A cold perspiration came over us, and our head felt as if we were undergoing the scalping operation, when our ears caught the words which followed: "If she had been *killed* last night as I desired, there would have been an end of her tricks;" we listened with breathless anxiety, but we lost what immediately followed, excepting the unconnected words, "broke loose—send the *Ranger* after her." The spirit of *Hodge*, and all the atrocities and murderous projects we had heard of, passed in review before us. We were no sooner heard to be stirring, than our host made his morning salutation from the adjoining apartment, but our tongue faltered in a reply; we, however, resolved to suppress our feelings for the present, and to wait the event with watchful anxiety. Upon joining him in the breakfast-room, his cordiality was painful to us, and upon taking his hand which he held out to us, we

felt an electric thrill pass through our veins, and all the mercury in our constitution was down at *Zero* in a moment, the vacuum above, making us light-headed; such at least were our sensations, but we could only attribute our embarrassment to indisposition and a restless night. The cheerfulness of his demeanour, evidently intended to rally us, was equally distressing to us, and we were about quitting the room when the old negro entered with the breakfast, and announced with much apparent satisfaction that Betsy had been caught,—"Then kill her directly," said his master. "Good God!" we exclaimed, "what do you mean?" but instead of regarding the question, he repeated the sanguinary edict, and hurried old Isaac out of the room, with the supplementary injunction, to "look sharp, and bring her *sweetbread* well deviled." This was the very acme of cold-blooded murder, with a spice of *canibalism* mixed with it, and we could at that moment have died a martyr in the cause of the condemned culprit; but the current of our purpose was suddenly turned, by having the singular hallucination which had maintained possession of our sympathies so long, satisfactorily enucleated.

Legal evidence is often known to germinate from a hidden *nucleus*, and to implicate a man in a monstrous crime before he has the least idea of it. Had Adolphus been employed for the prosecution against the parties concerned in this horrible murder, he would assuredly have introduced us to the jury as accessory before the fact, because the moment of our arrival in the island had been preconcerted as the signal for Betsy's sacrifice; *mais n'importe*,—she proved as pretty a corpse in the shape of a fine sleek calf, as ever graced the stalls of Leadenhall, and her *sweetbread* was excellent [1]!

There is no domestic animal on a West Indian estate, that has not received a name from the negroes; and although the ceremony is brief, the *cognomen* conferred is not the less irrevocable. The boys who attend the cattle will meet in convocation at the birth of a lamb, or a calf, and the lesser urchins over a brood of chickens, to consult upon a discriminative appellation; and

[1] The abstract idea of killing a calf to get at a sweetbread for breakfast, is upon a par with the sublime intelligence which first suggested the sacrifice of a few *score* of peacocks for a dish of their brains, an item of trifling importance among the magnificent extravagancies of oriental India.

we had not been a week in the island before we received the singular honour of having our own Patronymic assigned to a quadruped, which we shortly afterwards discovered, upon hearing it called in an admonitory tone, and upon finding ourselves personated by a fine *bull calf*, grazing by the side of the admiral on the station, who had attained the seniority of a *pasture bull.*

We were anxious to investigate the contexture of the new province of action we had entered: horses were accordingly ordered that we might ride over the estates, and while they were preparing we sauntered in the vicinity of the dwelling. Our attention was directed to a small circular hill about three hundred yards to the right, on the side of which some of the negroes' houses were ranged, but by far the largest number appeared in the valley immediately below the brow of the hill on which we stood. They were in detached situations, about ten or fifteen feet apart. Only a few adults and young children were to be seen: the principal portion of the occupants being at the time employed on some distant part of the property; and we were the more anxious to avail ourselves

of their absence to visit their little village, in order to avoid being intrusive in their presence. We descended by a narrow irregular path on the hill side, formed by the negroes in their communication with the sugar works, and we were presently at the bottom of the valley.

We were forcibly struck with the rustic beauty of the scene; and regarded it as one of those calm secluded spots of primitive life and simplicity, which nature had marked as her own before the avarice and cupidity of man had deprived her of her birthright.

The huts here were more sheltered than those on the hill, and a variety of indigenous plants and shrubs were growing in the intervals between them. Their construction was simple, and somewhat rude, and certainly at variance with the ideas of comfort and convenience which an inhabitant of a less temperate climate, or a more civilized state of society might entertain: and probably if one of them was exhibited in Europe as a specimen of the general construction of the negroes' houses, it might excite some degree of commiseration in behalf of the occupants: but this important fact

suddenly pressed upon our attention, that there was no great distance in the scale of comparison between them and the proprietor's residence, and the inference followed that they were more suitable to the climate, and the simplicity of the occupants' wants, than a construction of a more exalted character.

They consisted of a frame-work of wood, planked at the sides and ends, and in some instances of stone walls of similar dimensions; the area being sufficiently large to admit of a division into two rooms of about eight or ten feet square; and a span roof thatched with the dried leaves of the sugar cane: in short, the description given of the proprietor's dwelling answers for those of the negroes, except only in size, the shingled roof and *boarded* floor: this latter item we recognized as a *desideratum* in the negroes' huts, and we were not altogether satisfied with the assurance that they preferred the bare *sod.*

We were not a little surprised that no sort of reserve, or indication of fear, was manifested by the few individuals we met with; they saluted us rather with familiarity than respect, and the children

who were playing about, joined their little voices in greeting us with "*how d'ye massa?*" The adults were aged and superannuated, and were either attending the youngsters, or preparing victuals for their absent relatives.

In the noviciate of our enquiries the great question suggested itself: whether it was possible that they could be in the enjoyment of that repose, and of more solid happiness, than freedom in its worst shape could afford them?

We made an ascent on the opposite side of the valley, where we obtained an excellent view of the point we had left, and the line we had traversed; the works, consisting of a stone building of large dimensions, in which the cane juice is boiled into sugar, and afterwards cured, together with a distillery, a store-house and hospital, and a mill worked by mules, to grind the sugar canes, appeared to the left, and to *leeward* of "the *great house*[1]," and the tower of an old *wind*-mill which

[1] The "great house" is a term commonly applied by the Negroes to the proprietor's dwelling, in contradistinction to their own. As it usually stands on an elevation, it has also acquired among them the name of "the Buff," a corruption of the word, *above*.

had been converted into a store, and more recently as a place of refuge in the hurricane, formed a conspicuous feature in the scene, from the singularity of such a building in this island, whose mountainous character does not admit of a current of wind sufficiently free or powerful to work that description of mill. In the background is the island of *Joe Van-Dykes*, the birth-place, and at one time the property of the well known Dr. Lettsome, and part of the Danish island of Saint Thomas, appears on the horizon's verge. Fresh scenes opened upon us as we proceeded, presenting in quick succession a variety of bays and coves, and deep ravines, and precipices, and numerous small islets and keys, scattered in different directions on the smooth sea; and the works of another estate belonging to our host, suddenly opened upon us, immediately under the steep acclivities we were traversing:—here all appeared bustle and activity, the chimneys issuing flames and smoke, the mill going round, the cattle passing to and fro, and the negroes at their various occupations, all in the miniature of distance.

Thanks to the star that culminated at the hour

of our birth, we are alive to write this book. We had well nigh "shuffled off this mortal coil," at *north-side* mountain in Tortola, through the agency of a *sweetened* arrow. The steepness and irregularity of the upland sides, rendering carts impracticable, cause the use of wooden spouts or troughs to convey the canes to the mill. These troughs being ranged on the inclined plane, in a line as direct as possible to the works, or to the nearest vicinity, whence the canes are conveyed by carts, necessarily intersect at different intervals, the zigzag paths which lead to the mountain summits. In stepping across the range at a moment of imagined security, a single cane was thrown down the trough, and came with the velocity of an arrow impelled from a bow, and having received a check in the channel of the trough, it ascended in a curved direction to the height of our head, and passed within an inch of our existence. Many instances of injury to the negroes have occurred from this cause, and two who had lost their leg or arm, were afterwards pointed out to us.

In a few minutes we were in the field of action,

on the spot whence the shaft had received its impetus, and we were now assailed by about fifty or sixty men and women with such a volley, not of arrows—of greetings—such a confusion of tongues, as might have served for a dramatic representation of the Babylonian uproar. It was one universal burst either of *feeling* or *affectation*, and in the name of truth and humanity we confess we did not clearly understand the meaning of it. We found them employed cutting the sugar canes, on an inclined plane near the summit of the mountain whose acclivities we had traversed, and in shooting them down the troughs; and, if ever lightness of heart and buoyancy of spirits were manifested at a festival, we would forswear our birthright if this were not an indubitable indication of them. It is true, Bears are taught to dance on hot coals. "How you do, Massa?—Massa, how you do?—How d'ye Massa, we glad for see you, hope you well. You cum fra England? you cum fu stop? how you lebe *missy?*" alluding to the wife of their master, with a repetition of the same salutations and the same questions over and over again, as they pursued their labour.

They were no doubt glad to see us, if our arrival had caused their chains to be taken off, and clothing to be given to them, and certes we could not discern the former, and the latter were unequivocally before us. The imposition must have been practised with consummate skill, that gave to our host a fair proportion of the greeting we had received, and we instinctively demanded of him if these people were his slaves, and if we saw them undisguised?

There was no great difference in the materials and fashion of their attire, neither was the resemblance so rigid as to mark a systematic supply, or an equality of means among them. *Osnaburg*, a species of coarse duck, was the most common material of which the trowsers and shirts of the men, and the petticoats of the women, were made, and in some instances they were composed of calico, and blue *penistones*, or coarse woollen cloth; they were without shoes or stockings, and common hats or coloured caps were worn by the males, and a handkerchief tastily twisted into a sort of *toque* by the women.

But the whip, the whip's the thing—the whip—

the whip! A negro without any outward appearance of superiority beyond the "*badge of his authority*," directed them in their proceedings.

Reflection had abundant materials to feed on: but like an eastern despot it was exceeding sceptical as to the *materials* of its diet.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WHIP—GRINDING THE SUGAR CANES—THE BOILING-HOUSE—EFFECTS OF THE HURRICANE—THE PALMETTO ROYAL—ASPECT OF THE COUNTRY—FAT-HOG BAY—CASTUS MELOCASTUS—CASTLE BUILDING—NEGRO PROVERBS—THE JEW FISH—CASTUS GRANDIFLORA—A SMALL PARTY—ISAAC AND HIS DEPUTIES.

"Traverse with me the hills, the varied slopes,
The levell'd plains, crown'd with transcendant bloom;
Where ever-budding spring, and summer gay,
Dance hand in hand, and with eternal joy,
Lead up the jocund harvest to the mill."

THE descent to the works was steep and rugged, and the poverty of the soil, even in those parts selected for cultivation, was manifest on every side. As we approached the works to *leeward* of them the vegetable exhalations of the cane juice in the course of boiling, and of marine decompositions from a long sandy beach which skirted this part of the estate; had a peculiar influence upon the senses, materially promoted

by the novelty of the surrounding objects, and the secluded wildness of the spot, which was apparently ill suited to the conveniences of a manufactory.

It was here that the lash of '*the whip*' first sounded in our ears; and, although we were satisfied as we passed onward, and beheld the carts drawn by oxen conveying the canes to the mill from the spot to which they had been conveyed by the troughs, that the sound proceeded from the whips of the boys driving them, the conviction was too powerfully associated with the prepossession which had been long established on our mind, that there was little distinction recognized between the negroes and the cattle. The sound was more frequent as we came to the works, where we found the mules working the mill, urged onward by the frequent repetition of it by the boys attending them.

The greetings of the negroes as we approached them, were similar to those we had received in the field, and instead of sullen discontent, there was a cheerfulness in their countenance and demeanour for which we were by no means prepared. Their attire appeared inferior to the clothing of those

we had before seen, which we at first attributed to the difference of their occupation, but upon further inspection, we found that most of them were older people and children, and we could not refrain from reprobating the indecency of nakedness among several of the latter, many of whom had attained the age of twelve to fourteen years. They were chiefly engaged in strewing the *magoss* or macerated cane, after it had passed through the mill, to dry in the sun, or in conveying it as fuel to a projecting shed attached to the boiling house, where two or three adults were engaged in making fire under the coppers; others were carrying the canes from the spot where they had been deposited by the carts, to the people employed in passing them through the mill. The whole scene was extremely animated and interesting to a stranger.

In the boiling-house, where we were received by the manager, we found a negro at each of the coppers attending to the boiling and skimming of the cane juice; and what with the steam, and the ladling and splashing, and the calling to the firemen outside to regulate the fire, there was no lack of items for the observation and instruction of a novice, and we re-

galed ourselves in the mean time with some new sugar in water, which is not only refreshing but reputed wondrous wholesome.

The buildings were on a larger scale, and their details were more complex than we had imagined requisite for the purposes for which they were designed; but there was a want of cleanliness and order, and the general aspect indicated dilapidation and poverty: they had been partially destroyed in the late hurricane, and were imperfectly repaired; indeed, every set of works in the island had been more or less injured, and many were totally laid waste; every estate too, was more or less mortgaged, and many without resources to rebuild the works or to continue the cultivation. This was the case with our host:—his property consisted of no less than ten or eleven estates, besides land and tenements in the town, and five estates only were now in cultivation, to which the negroes of the others had been removed. The lamentable effects of this awful visitation were every where apparent: vegetation had suffered much under its exterminating influence; large trees had been levelled with the ground, others had been blasted by the light-

ning, or shorn of their verdant branches. On the beach of the long open bay bounding the estate, a few cocos which had gradually reared their lofty crests, and perhaps for centuries resisted the scathful storm, were now leafless and lifeless, their stems alone standing as an appropriate symbol of desolation; and we learnt that almost every tree of that species in the island had been destroyed.

We pursued a different route in our return to Mount Healthy, striking more into the heart of the island, by a zig-zag bridle path as precipitous and irregular as those we had before traversed, till we at length reached a more beaten track bearing the ruts of cart-wheels, and which took a circuitous range of more easy ascent between the hills. In a sheltered situation we saw several cabbage-trees, (the Palmetto royal) whose fresh and luxuriant foliage bore a singular contrast with the sterile barrenness of the spot where they stood, and the general aspect of vegetation, and whose *corinthian* beauty gave them the metaphorical semblance of so many virgins—we were in the "*Virgin islands*,"—who had taken shelter in the recesses of the mountain wilds, to escape the ravaging hand of the de-

stroying tempest. This beautiful tree, the *areca oleracea* of Linnæus, may be termed the Venus de Medicis of the vegetable creation, and empress of the palm tribe.

> ——" Her stately column rears
> Aloft in air; wide-waving plumage crowns
> Her head majestic; whilst, with sovereign pride
> Erect, she views the humble woods below."

It frequently attains the height of 150 feet, and according to Ligon, who published his account of Barbadoes in 1657, it had been seen in that island by some of the earliest settlers as high as 300 feet, which Mr. Coleridge has been "so bold as to say, is a gigantic lie;" for the same reason we presume that he disbelieves in the glowing changes of colour in the dying dolphin. He could find no one who would answer for more than 120 or 130 feet, but we see no reason that the tree, growing in all the unrestrained luxuriance of nature at the time the island was first visited by European settlers, should not have acquired, through the lapse of centuries, a much greater height than when subjected to interruptions in its growth by the inroads of cultiva-

tion, or the caprice and inordinate fancies of man, who would destroy one of the noblest productions of nature for a dish of *cabbage!*

Ligon's account of this tree is whimsically diffuse: "I believe," says he, "there is not a more royal or magnificent tree growing on the earth, for beauty and largeness not to be paralleled; and excels so abundantly in those two properties and perfections, all the rest, as if you had ever seen her, you could not choose but fall in love with her. I'm sure I was extremely much, and upon good and antique authority; for if *Xerxes'* strange Lydian love, the plantain tree, was loved for her age, why may not I love this for her largeness? I believe there are more women loved for their largeness than their age, if they have beauty for an addition, as this has."

The stem of the palmetto royal is beautifully straight and tapering, although rather larger in diameter about one third of its height. While it is young the bark is tender, of a dark grey colour, and marked at the distance of every foot with a circle, which discovers very near how many years it hath been in the ground: but when it comes to

the full growth, it is all over so solid and smooth, that there is nothing to be seen. The top of it is adorned with several fair branches channelled and smooth, which have on each side an infinite number of leaves, green, long, narrow, and very thin, which resemble large feathers, forming, as it were, a rich and beautiful crown. The tree disburdens itself every month of some one of its branches, as also of a bark which is loosened from below, which is four or five feet long, about two broad, and of the thickness of tanned leather. On the top of its trunk, and, as it were, in its heart, is a whitish marrow or pith, very tender and savory, tasting like a small nut if eaten raw, and being boiled and seasoned, may be numbered among the most delicious dishes of the Antilles; the French call it *chou de Palmiste.*

One look more, ye chaste daughters of an imperial race! and we turned to gaze upon them before our progress closed them from our sight. A flamingo, of a pure carnation colour, the first we had seen in its native haunts, at that moment sought a resting-place in the peaceful glen.

The defile we pursued, brought us to the spot

where we had on the evening of our arrival stopped to contemplate the town and harbour, and the singular semi-opacous effect produced by the mountain shadows. Extensive tracts of land which bore the marks of tillage, but which were no longer in cultivation, lay before us on every side; and the soil had been so much washed by the heavy rains, and impoverished by long culture, as to afford only a scanty herbage to a considerable number of sheep —not of *Jason's* race—and goats, which grazed on the acclivities. The lank, long-legged dimensions of these animals, accorded well with the adust and barren appearance of the country, almost realizing the spirit of Horace's description of famine:

> "Dura cutis, per quam spectari viscera possent."

And we bethought ourselves of the *green velvet* and *blanched almonds* which decorate the upland sides of England's fattened land. The guava bush, from whose fruit the superlative of all jellies is made, was growing in unrestrained wildness, in detached situations about these fallow districts.

In the route to Mount Healthy, we saw another body of negroes engaged in a different descrip-

tion of labour; and the nature of their occupation accounted to us for the inactivity of the works of that estate to which they belonged. We had not, indeed, been sensible of the value of the rain which had fallen during the night, until we found that drought had retarded the work of the plantation, and that those refreshing showers had changed the order of the day for the disposition of the negroes: they were engaged in *planting* the cane for the ensuing crop, instead of cutting that which was ripe; the land which had been previously prepared, being sufficiently refreshed to assist the germinating principle of the young plant which was to be committed to its bosom. Considerable embarrassment is occasionally experienced by the planter owing to excessive drought, or the uncertainty and partial supply of rain, which frequently frustrates his most consummate designs, and annihilates his most reasonable hopes of a fair crop. This evil is experienced more or less in all the islands, but especially in those of trifling elevation, or which have been longest under culture, and consequently over-cleared and deprived of woods, so essential to the attraction of clouds charged with rain.

The negroes were stationed on the brow of a hill above us, which was difficult of access, and we passed them without stopping, but their voices reached us in confused tones of hilarity.

We found nearly the same character of country in different directions, the whole island presenting a succession of undulating surfaces and precipitous eminences from one extremity to the other, without any considerable portion of level land in any one part. Cultivation was consequently rendered very laborious, and communication across the country, which could only be effected on horseback or on foot, was necessarily tedious, but at times made interesting by the frequent and varied changes of scenery in the route; the heights affording a view of the coast and breaking surf, with the intermediate country, and numerous islands of various forms and size, with perhaps the white sail of a distant vessel, breaking the wide expanse of ocean; and points of less elevation bounding the range of sight within the confines of a deep glen or a secluded valley. The mountains do not attain very considerable elevation, the highest, called *Sage hill*, being not more than 1,650 feet from the level of the sea.

The extensive ranges of waste land and pasturage, afford the negroes an opportunity of cultivating provisions to an almost unlimited extent, and they are not generally restricted, as in most of the islands where cultivation is more extended, in the rearing of any particular description of live stock. Some of them possess several head of horned cattle, as well as goats and sheep, which range over the mountain wastes, or herd with the stock belonging to the estates [1]. These numerous flocks and herds, with here and there a temporary hut, marking the station of a cattle keeper or watchman, assist in infusing a feeling of life and animation into the wild, and in some parts, desolate appearance which the country presents. We found several species of *cacti*, growing in the most barren spots, particularly the *melo-cactus*, which gave a singular effect to scenes where vegetation appeared totally excluded. In the neighbourhood of *Fat-hog Bay*, in the south-eastern quarter of the island, and

[1] Tortola is subject to the general laws of the Leeward Islands, by which the negroes are prohibited keeping horned cattle or sheep, but the prohibition has fallen into disregard in this island; and several oxen belonging to the negroes, were employed on hire by the proprietor of Mount Healthy, to convey sugars, &c.

especially about the ruins of *Fort Hodge*, they were very numerous; and in removing one of them for the purpose of examining the root, we disturbed a nest of *scorpions* under some loose stones. These creatures are very numerous in Tortola. Baziel Hodge, who formerly owned the land in this direction, had been a very considerable proprietor, and the "*Mansion-house*," whose site is still defined by ruins within a short distance of those of the fort which retains his name, afforded, in days gone by, ample testimony of his wealth and hospitality[1]. The destroyer, time, has since stamped the spot with the seal of desolation.

Cold guinea fowl, ham, and hard eggs, might have made an excellent repast for appetites sharpened by a long ride, and sea breezes; but a clever fellow, who had retired to this remote district to follow his vocation in quiet, supplied us with fish in abundance, and of excellent flavor. He was a free mulatto, who had acquired a reputation for some share of eminence in the art of

[1] The name of Hodge is not to be mentioned in connexion with this island, or indeed with the West Indies, without reminding one of him, who expiated with his life the crime of murder. The person we allude to, was in no way connected with him.

boat-building: the adjacent hills afforded him a gratuitous supply of wood, which had grown up since tillage had ceased to furrow their upland sides, and the unfrequented and secluded character of the neighbourhood had suggested to him a *parole* right of occupation. The proprietor of the land now stood before him, not to dispute that right, but rather to welcome his presence as an indication that reviving nature had courted back the presence of man to share in her resuscitated munificence. Possessing a mind that was constantly in a state of speculative fermentation, so essential to that species of mental architecture called "castle building," which "gives to airy nothings a local habitation and a name," he had already persuaded himself that an "*el Dorado*" was to be found in the bowels of his demesne at Fat-hog Bay; and it was by no means beyond the elastic stretch of his imagination, to contemplate the settlement of the boat-builder on the spot as the germ of a future dock-yard, or the *nucleus* of a great commercial entrepôt. For ourselves we could scarce help coveting the uncontrouled freedom, and apparent ease and contentment of this self-elected tenant of

Nature, as he welcomed us to his peaceful habitation. It was built in a sheltered situation near the beach, where two or three vessels of several tons' burthen, the work of his hands, assisted only by two negroes, a man and a boy, were in a state of forwardness. His gun occasionally gave him a *bonne bouche* in the shape of a grilled *Ramier*, a plover, or a brace or two of ground doves; guinea-birds, and the common fowl ranged in the vicinity of the dwelling, and a capacious *Crawl* on the beach, built of some loose stones, contained a preserve of turtle, and some choice fish which his nets had ensnared[1]. The neighbouring seas abound in great variety of the finny tribe, but a self-evident fact in recommendation of a crawl was suggested to us by the negro who was engaged in catching one of its tenants, and who remarked that

[1] The crawl answers the purpose of a cauf, and is common on estates which are bounded by the sea coast, and are distant from a market supply of fish. It usually consists of a stone wall, sometimes of wooden stakes and planks, in the form of a square or parallelogram, built on the beach in about four or five feet water, the top being above the surface. It is a preserve for turtle, and a variety of fish, which have been first caught in nets, particularly those of a choice description, until they are required for the table.

"*ebry day daw fissing day, but ebry day da no foo hetch fiss*[1];" a proverb among them that has more meaning than meets the eye, and is often used as a speech of condolence when success has not attended their speculations; and we were moreover reminded, that "*every haul of the net did not catch a jew-fish,*" a saying intended to inculcate a provident regard to any fortunate acquirement, as well as to do honour to so scarce and delicate a morsel. This Israelite of the ocean is esteemed pre-eminent of piscatory dainties—

> "Can Europe's seas, in all their finny realms,
> Aught so delicious as the jew-fish shew?"

whence probably its name, from the reputed relish which its human correllatives have for the most excellent of fish, and therefore "worth a Jew's eye." The unfrequency of its being *caught*, might have occasioned the cognomen, if that circumstance did not also imply a scarcity of the tribe, which with the *locality* of its haunts, is not to be reconciled with the received opinion that *Jews*, Scotchmen, sparrows

[1] Every day may be fishing-day, but every day we don't catch fish.

and crows, are to be found in all parts of the world. Saint Anthony might put the question at rest. It is seldom that a fish so large as the jew-fish affords such exquisite flavour, whence it is preferred by some even to turtle.

In the evening we retraced the route we had taken from Mount Healthy, and arrived there after night-fall. The narrowness of the paths on the hill-sides, obliged us to travel in single file the greatest part of the distance, and being less acquainted than our companions with the character of the country, and unaccustomed to depend for our safety almost entirely upon the sagacity of the animal we rode, we occasionally winced in repassing particular dangers which had caused our attention to sympathize with our apprehensions, as we encountered them in the morning. The vegetable fragrance which issued from the valleys below us, and from the wild shrubs and flowers which here and there rendered our pathway nearly impervious; the warm exhalations from boiling sugar, and from the supper cauldrons of the negroes as we approached the works of a plantation, and the serenade of the frogs, crickets, snakes, and lizards,

yielded a liberal repast to our auricular and olfactory organs, and gave additional buoyancy to our animal spirits, which had been already excited by the good cheer of our host of the Fat-hog wilderness.

In a deep glen or pass through which we defiled, the vegetable perfume was so powerful, as to cause us to stop to ascertain the source whence it came; and the broad moonlight enabled us to discover about twenty or thirty flowers of the *cactus grandiflora*, or night-blooming Cereus, which were gradually expanding in full luxuriance to their midnight and transitory splendour [1].

As we approached the dwelling at Mount Healthy, we heard sounds of music and revelry; whilst all around, save the lizards and their chorus, whose minstrelsy rather gave evidence of prevailing dreariness, seemed sunk in repose, and one solitary light in the direction of the house, alone indicated the presence of a wakeful spirit, excepting ourselves. "Bravo, Miss Polly!" exclaimed our host, at the moment we were about inquiring

[1] This flower begins to open in the evening, and is fully blown about midnight, gradually fading towards morning, when it decays.

whence the sounds proceeded; and our further interrogatories were satisfied with the assurance that we should soon behold. We dismounted at the stables which were attached to the works, and walked to the dwelling in silence. The door and shutters were not yet closed, and a faint gleam of light issued from the hall-lamp through the windows, giving brightness to the dew-drops which hung upon the creepers and shrubs about the building. The instruments sounded like a hurdy-gurdy and a tambourine, and we could also hear the obtuse sound of unshod feet, in the action of dancing or stamping on boards, and a shrill voice humming in accordance with the tune that was playing, which was a well known country-dance or quadrille. Stationed for a few minutes on the outside of the building, we could observe through the windows the group within. Master Isaac was leaning in a careless position, with his left shoulder against the side of the room near to the door, beating a tambourine *con amore*, his right foot stamping quick time with tolerable violence. *Miss* Polly was seated, or rather squatting in an easy posture, with both hands to her mouth to sup-

port the instrument she was playing, of the construction of which we had not yet an idea; and *Miss* Nelly was attempting elegance in a figure-dance of her own, accompanying her movements with her voice[1]. We could have revoked our adoption of that urchin *Paul*, as our page, for putting a stop to the performance by giving intimation of our presence, which caused us to enter the hall, as the two damsels made their exit through the adjoining chambers, and we heard their tittering as they departed from the dwelling. These wenches were Mulatto girls attached to the house, and the instrument on which Miss Polly excelled, was one of her master's combs with a piece of paper round it. Master Isaac, who had been so active in the apprehension and execution of poor Betsy the calf, was a negro, whose woolly hair was white with age, and he grinned self-satisfaction at our expressing admiration of his musical talent, and provided us supper with more than ordinary dispatch, introducing to our especial notice some small

[1] The coloured women, in maintaining a grade of superiority over the negroes, are extremely tenacious of the distinctive prenomen of *Miss*, as well as a mark of respect among themselves.

cray-fish, about the size of large prawns, which had been caught in the ravines, or water-courses that run from the mountains to the sea. The genius of master *Paul* was not only precocious, but unlike that of most boys in more refined life, it was directed to useful purposes; and he was not unconscious of his importance on the establishment at Mount Healthy. Old *Isaac* had been his preceptor in all the intricacies of household economy; and so ductile and quick of comprehension had his pupil been in going through the gradations of initiation, that he now only required additional age and different aspect of person, with the removal of his guardian to boot, to qualify him, in all respects, for the command-in-chief of the household, with the enviable privilege of bearing the first dish, as a substantive proof of his usefulness and consequent advancement in his vocation, as well as that of apportioning the domestic duties of the establishment between as many individuals as could well be employed. This was the most important part of the major domo's occupation, for it not only relieved him of a share of the labour which strictly appertained to his office, as well as a portion of responsi-

bility, but he was sensible that he acquired importance from the number of his deputies. Isaac, however, took good care to keep in subjection the soaring genius of the young aspirant, by exacting a rigid performance of the several duties imposed upon him, which, although not particularly prescribed according to time and place, usually had their turn in the course of every twelve hours in each day. And so determined was he that idleness should not contaminate the healthful constitution of his protegé, that he armed him with a bundle of peacocks' feathers to keep off the infection, and to protect his master's face and legs from the assaults of the musquitoes and sand-flies at the same time. It may be imagined that our arrival gave Paul infinite satisfaction, if only on account of the opportunity it afforded him to develope in a more eminent degree his practical knowledge; but when he found himself attached in great measure to our person and protection, he showed frequent signs of a disposition to throw off all allegiance to his venerable preceptor, and to declare his own independence. To accompany us in our rides was his great delight; and from a consciousness, or a reasonable supposi-

tion, that every object was new to us, he was active in searching for something to which to direct our attention, as he followed behind the horse, keeping hold of the animal's tail, and brushing off the flies with a bough or some dried cane-leaves. He had accompanied us in this manner from Mount Healthy to Fat-hog Bay and back again, a distance, including the winding of the paths, of not less than twelve or fourteen miles, besides being constantly on foot while on the spot, and he showed no signs of fatigue, as he stood by us at supper with his badge of office, checking the sanguinary inclinations of the mosquitoes. That he continued to entertain some share of fearful respect for the authority of Isaac, was manifest from the difference in his demeanour when the supervisor was absent: he would then offer an opinion, or convey a piece of intelligence either to our host or to ourselves, as well as relax in the necessary motions of his brush, so as to give the sagacious blood-suckers an opportunity to get a hasty meal and be off. "Me put him in de water, sar; him look fresh," he said to us in an under tone as we were dissecting a cray-fish with our fingers; "Look fresh! why what's the

matter with it?" was our response, imagining that his superior intelligence in such matters, had discovered a blemish in the fish, which our organs could not detect. "Massa, him die widout water," rejoined Paul, to our great confusion and his own infinite satisfaction, that he had astonished us with the profundity of his knowledge; and we had thrown down the cray-fish in despair of comprehending his meaning, when the urchin entered from the adjoining chamber, whither he had proceeded in haste, to satisfy our doubts by exhibiting a flower of the cactus, which he had cut from the parent stem in our journey homeward, and placed in a tumbler of water. It had doubtless been checked in its expansion by being dismembered from the plant; but we had it placed on a table in our chamber, and when we retired to rest we watched the gradual spreading of the calyx, till it acquired the diameter of about nine inches, resembling in appearance a beautiful star of pure white and yellow, and diffusing a delicious fragrance through the room. In the morning it hung dejected over the rim of the glass, dying like a rose in aromatic pain.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ROAD TOWN—DEPOPULATION—A PROHIBITORY ORDINANCE —METHODISTS—COURTS OF LAW—A TRIAL BY JURY—A CO-PARTNERSHIP—A SYMBOL OF CIVILIZATION.

"But, if I tell how these two did co-act,
Shall I not lie in publishing a truth?
Sith yet there is a credence in my heart,
An esperance so obstinately strong,
That doth invert the attest of eyes and ears;
As if those organs had deceptious functions,
Created only to calumniate."

Troilus and Cressida.

THE Road Town hath a church, and at the time to which we are referring, a very respectable and intelligent clergyman gathered about him as large a congregation as it could well accommodate. The negroes, of whom it was chiefly composed, were extremely orderly and attentive, and we understood they were regular in their attendance. The portion of white persons was very small, and this circumstance, perhaps, impressed us more forcibly

with the fallen condition of the colony. Four years previous, the white population of the town had been reduced to 207, and it was now considerably below that number. Whither they had gone it was not our purpose to inquire; but a singular prohibition enforced by legislative enactment, implied that many had, either directly or indirectly, been sacrificed to *hard riding*, and no person was allowed to ride fast through the town to endanger the lives of those that remained. Our little page, who attended us on the evening of our arrival, amused us by his endeavour to save us the penalty of a breach of the law. The animal we had mounted, totally regardless of the consequences which might accrue to ourselves, and eager to return to his stable, started off at a gallop, and before we could restrain the ardour of his purpose, our guide called out "Massa, gently, you no do dat, you no gallop, Massa!" and upon endeavouring to comprehend the cause of the injunction, he further propounded that the police might be after us. The discharge of a cannon loaded with grape-shot was not particularly interdicted, as it might have been done without causing injury to a few children, and

two or three straggling adults on the beach, or workmen employed repairing the dilapidated buildings: we saw no other signs of activity or intercourse, until the sabbath brought a large portion of the community together.

The meeting-house of the methodists irresistibly claimed our attention, for the very obvious reason, that the congregation therein assembled was so immediately under the wing of our mother church, that the circumstance in a different cause might have signified *accordance* rather than *divarication*, but which in reality indicated a spirit of opposition and gratuitous indecorum, which would have better suited the purpose of rival tradesmen. The house had been erected so close that the persons of the respective congregations could be seen through the windows of each building, and the obstreperous manifestation of their piety occasioned serious and repeated interruption to the service of the church. This was the first circumstance which caused us to advert to the charges which had been urged, as we imagined unjustly, against some of the sectarians.

The gaol, which also stood in the vicinity of the church, was substantially built of stone, and was

really a very *respectable* looking edifice, and the residence of one *Mister Rogers Isaacs*, a personage of very capacious purpose in the community, was equally imposing in dimensions and renovated effect, amidst the dilapidation and ruin conspicuous in every direction.

There were no other buildings, dwellings, or tenements of whatsoever description, that claimed our attention by any outward characteristic of superiority, if we except the residence of the postmaster, which stood as a monument of his wisdom in having settled himself upon a rock; for it had braved the fury of the hurricane which had desolated the whole town. The Courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Chancery, the Council and Assembly Chambers, were things of name and import, but their skeleton forms existed only within the precincts of a room about twenty feet square, designed for meaner purposes, and a spirit of litigation was still alive in the community to feed and to give them effect.

It has been said that there is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous—we could have invoked the spirit of *Hale* to witness judicial dignity

divested of all its essential essence, even of the "wisdom of the wig," and "the absolute perfection of human reason," descended in that one step, from the apex to the *base*[1]. The room in which we witnessed the performance, or what rather appeared a burlesque rehearsal of "trial by Jury," was as rude and uncouth as the interior of a *packing* case—we speak with no reference to a *packed* jury—the sides and doors were formed of plain pitch-pine plank without paint or ornament; cobwebs were the only hangings, and the nests of the "*Jack Spaniard*," an insect which resembles a long-bodied wasp, were the only decorations to the ceiling; these animals appeared to enjoy a prescriptive right of occupation, as well as of annoying every person who came within the area of the building, even to the "great lord-chief." On one side of the room a platform was erected about three

[1] It was the opinion of that eminent judge, that the common law of England was "the absolute perfection of human reason, for nothing that is contrary to reason," said he "is consonant to law!" Have law and reason diverged since the days of Hale, from that point where they were so happily concentrated, or is the dogma of the judge proved to be a paradox, by the superior intelligence of the present age, and the penetrating and transcendant mind of our great champion of legal reform?

feet from the floor, on which stood a long desk, similar in its construction to the occasional music stands used on the stage at theatres on an oratorio night—this was the bench:

a table stood in a transverse position covered with green baize, with long forms on either side, for the convenience of the counsel; and another side of the room parallel with the table, was occupied by a range of seats placed one above another on an inclined plane, for the jury. A crowded auditory of black, white, and yellow, most of whom appeared in an unenviable state of tropical exudation, occupied the standing room.

The question at issue was one of more than ordinary interest: and we freely give to any writer of novels an outline of the case, with our unqualified

consent to depict the plaintiff as great a scoundrel as ever figured in the pages of romance.

There lived in a distant part of the island a widow lady, who had been left by a deceased husband with an only daughter, dependent for their subsistence upon the fluctuating and precarious products of the sugar plantation on which they resided. The infatuating prospects of brighter days, which had led many West Indian proprietors into the path of ruin, by improvident expenditure and unreasonable expectancies, had placed the property in question under mortgage during the proprietor's life-time; and continued depreciation and bad management had gradually reduced the surplus income, over the interest of the debt, to a portion scarce sufficient to support his widow and child. It was under a load of accumulated distress, produced by a variety of contingent circumstances, that the daughter had been subjected to renewed and repeated importunities from the plaintiff, to become his wife, which from motives of prudence, and an increasing repugnance to his person and character, she had long ago repeatedly and stedfastly declined. In the mean time, and at

different intervals, they had received pecuniary assistance from an anonymous hand; and although suspicion had frequently pointed out to them the plaintiff as the party conveying it, there were circumstances which counteracted this impression, and their necessities so far reconciled them to the gratuity, as to induce them to make use of it. The late hurricane had given another severe blow to the already fallen condition of these unfortunate females, when the plaintiff, who had for some time ceased his importunities by absenting himself from the island, again pressed his suit with renewed ardour, and upon meeting with a further repulse, he declared himself the party who had made the remittances, and demanded immediate and unequivocal repayment of the amount. The action was brought for the recovery, and he obtained a verdict! Imaginative reader! let thy mind pursue the distressing details of what followed [1].

[1] In the "third Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry into the administration of Civil and Criminal Justice in the West Indies," printed by order of the House of Commons, in 1826, it is stated that, "owing principally to the reduced number of the white inhabitants of this island, but partly, it is said, to the state of the law as to the qualification and exemption of jurors, a sufficient number of persons duly qualified to serve upon juries for the trial

We have already said that every thing around us appeared in a state of decay. Even *Justice*, long since reputed *blind*, had here all her other faculties impaired; and the moral *dry-rot* which was abroad, had been allowed to reach and to contaminate the very crutches upon which she hobbled.—Her guardian—he, in whom all the obligations of her sacred office had been reposed, and from whom all her salutary dispensations were expected to emanate for the safeguard and welfare of the community—was not only stricken in years and bordering on decrepitude, but he had not even the advantage of a legal education to qualify him for the trusteeship. He was nevertheless a legal *Proteus*—at one time a judge in the Court of King's Bench—at another, a judge in the Court of Common Pleas—then Chancellor, and Baron of the Exchequer—sometimes judge in Admiralty—and occasionally, as matter of course, presiding in a Court of *Error*. He was also *master* and *examiner in Chancery*, which gave him great insight to all matters upon which he might have to decide in the *Equity Court*, and the

of causes in the common law courts of this island, *is not always to be depended on.*"

felicitous satisfaction of *confirming his own reports.* All this was so far well, that it were possible the functions of this hydra-headed judgeship were legally and equitably exercised; but he was also a *planter* and a *merchant*, not *ostensibly* directing his legal mind to agriculture, and to considerations affecting tare and tret, barter, bottomry-bonds, brokerage, and ballast, and all the manifold details of commercial enterprise, but he participated in the "profit and loss" account of a co-partnership which subsisted between himself and the aforesaid Mr. Rogers Isaacs, a public functionary of no less official weight in the community than himself.

Mr. Isaacs bore his honours thick upon him. He was a puisne judge in each of the several courts we have enumerated, acting in concert with his legal and mercantile partner, although like him not qualified by education for the office. He was a member of the legislative council, as was also his colleague,—bearing the distinguished and distinguishing title of *honourable!* and an *aid-de-camp* to the governor. He held several attorneyships, so did his colleague—that is to say, he acted as the agent and representative of absent individuals whose es-

tates he controlled, and he also held the important appointment of "RECEIVER *in chancery*" for several other properties, to which he had been nominated either by the court in England, or by the *equity* judge in Tortola. These appointments had procured for him the occasional vocation and cognomen of a *planter*. That Mr. Isaacs the *merchant*, should supply Mr. Isaacs the *planter*, with all the necessaries he might require for the estates he controlled, was extremely natural; but we must confess that our finite comprehension recognised something repugnant to common sense and common honesty in the fact, that Mr. Isaacs, the *receiver* in chancery, should go before his mercantile partner the *master* in chancery, to audit and pass his, or rather *their* accounts, and that this legal and mercantile adjunct should afterwards sit in the character of *judge*, to decide upon any exceptions or questions which might be taken, or arise out of such a proceeding. We do really think that such a combination could not possibly exist between any two persons, or body of persons, without militating against justice, and compromising those moral obligations which the laws of civilized so-

ciety have every where prescribed; and it goes far to show to what a state of degradation the society here was reduced, when those whose station in life demanded of them a cautious regard to established principles of conduct, could manifest such singular indifference to public reproach, and to the gratifying convictions of self-respect[1].

The sketch is unpleasing, let us turn to another.—

We have heard of a man, who having been cast upon a shore that was unknown to him, became satisfied that he was in a *civilized* country upon beholding a *gibbet:* a strong indication, we take it, of a species of philosophy which bases itself on the imagination, rather than the judgment, and which possibly might lead this imaginative traveller, if he

[1] In the report from which we have quoted in the preceding note, it is also stated that "Tortola had in Messrs. Crabb and Isaacs, the same persons, attornies, merchants, receivers, masters, judges; but then, they were the only *respectable* persons there, and what was more, the only persons of *substance* in whom the merchants at home, who had monies lent upon all the estates in the island, *could confide.*" What thought the *other* members of his Majesty's Council, the members of the assembly, and other public functionaries, of this very flattering antithesis?

were undergoing capital punishment, to the pleasing conviction that he was merely taking a *swing* for amusement. Shakspeare says, "there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so:"—and, with the aid of association, there is less singularity in the deduction of the cast-away traveller, than appears at first sight. The gallows was unknown to the aboriginal savages of the new world, until *civilized* Europe

> "Bestow'd her customs, and amended theirs,
> But left her vices also to their heirs."

Next to the fixing of the cross as the emblem of the Catholic faith, which it was professedly the first object of the Spaniards to disseminate, the erection of a gallows in such places as they fixed upon for the establishment of a city, was performed with no less ceremony and solemnity.

If, therefore, other proof were wanting that civilization had retrograded at Tortola, conviction might have been established in our mind upon beholding near the Road Town, that *symbol* of its existence tottering with decay, and no longer worthy of the office for which it had been designed.

It might, moreover, have forced the mind to the recognition of a fact from which it naturally revolts, that human life has in most countries, and even in *Great* Britain, been sacrificed to the laws in undue proportion to the advancement of civilization and refinement, as if *legal* murder were necessary to secure the promotion and maintenance of civil rights—

> "Here while the proud, their long-drawn pomps display,
> There the black gibbet glooms beside the way."

It is true that a more refined policy has of late years removed the standing gibbet from the public gaze in England, and that our criminal code has undergone very salutary revision; but there yet remain vestiges of barbarous and impolitic enactments, unworthy of a nation calling itself free and enlightened.

CHAPTER XIII.

PARSON AUDAIN—AN ADVENTURE—THE CORNISH VICAR—A PRIZE—WEST INDIAN AUCTIONS—A FUNERAL—CLERICO-MILITARY FUNCTIONARIES—DUELLING EXTRAORDINARY—AFRICAN APPRENTICES—OF THE TERM CREOLE.

——— "All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts."

As You Like It.

THERE appears to have been great spirit of emulation among the actors on the little theatre of Tortola. Whether he had been beaten out of the field by the monopoly of Messrs. Crabb and Isaacs, or whether it better suited his erratic and speculative turn of mind to exhibit his talents in a more enlarged sphere of action, certain it is that we arrived too late to witness the inimitable performances of one *parson* Audain. "This Mr. Audain," says Mr. Coleridge, "was a patriot: few of his

cloth like him; he was not content with praying against the enemies of his country, he fought against them also. Saint Peter certainly owned a boat, and the authorised translation (Mr. Audain loved literal orthodoxy) intimates a partnership amongst some of the apostles in a ship. So Mr. Audain built a schooner, and carried on for many years a system of practical polemics with the disputants of the French school, to his own abundant profit and notoriety."

We were only permitted to lend our ears to the recital of some portion of his history.

He commenced his career in life as a midshipman in the navy; but it is evident that he possessed a soul above the restraint which that office imposed upon him, and he gave up "watch and watch," and reefing topsails, for a province of action which might better suit his inclinations and his talents. As a midshipman, he might have remained till the present day, one of the multitude of that class of persons wearing his Majesty's livery, walking through a bare existence towards that *promotion* which defeats the purposes of hope, unless, perchance, he had obtained that passport to rank called

interest; and he therefore wisely, we think, exchanged an existence for a *living*, by appearing on the theatre of life in the character of a parson. The West Indies, of all places in the world, presented an extensive field for the exercise of his sacred calling, but it proved too circumscribed for a mind that knew no bounds; and in order to fill up the *hiatus* between his occasional avocations in the church, he at length yielded to its craving solicitude after more active and profitable occupation, by embarking in the business of an *auctioneer*, and the more hazardous speculations attendant upon *privateering*.

He was evidently endowed with the essential elements of a great mind, strengthened by a physical organization which capacitated him for deeds of daring, and which enabled him to acquire great self-possession, and that enviable habit of directing and concentrating his energies, to the immediate object which called for their operation.

In the pulpit he was eloquent and persuasive, manifesting all the energy of a devout spirit, and a total abstraction from sublunary speculations. In his sale-room he was equally happy in engaging

the attention of his hearers, by descanting upon the beauties and utility of an article which no one else could detect, in a strain of winning hyperbole worthy of George Robins himself, until "they who came to hear, remained to *buy*." And in all the various details of his privateering exploits, he was no less distinguished for zeal, ability, and courage. To suppose, for a moment, that no occurrence of great and exciting interest could divert him from the particular pursuit in which he might be engaged; that the current of his intentions was not to be turned out of its prescribed course by something which involved stupendous concern, would argue a pertinacity of purpose at the expense of his judgment; besides, Audain was mortal, and he was not exempt from many of the frailties and weaknesses inherently co-existent with our finite nature. It will not therefore appear surprising, that he was once known to allow the powerful dictates of self-interest, and the alluring prospects of patriotic enterprise to overcome, at a moment's notice, a proper regard to the duties which appertained to his more sacred calling.

He was engaged in the pulpit when the report

of a cannon was heard from seaward. From his station, as well as from other parts of the church, a clear view of the harbour was obtained, and a vessel shortly afterwards appeared in the offing crossing the entrance; another report was presently heard, and the shot which was seen to throw up the water where it lodged in the direction of her course, gave evident token that it proceeded from another vessel that was in chace of her. It is scarce to be supposed, that the attention of the congregation was not more or less diverted from the purposes of devotion. Audain for awhile proceeded in his discourse, occasionally taking parenthetical glances at the vessel, until the appearance of a frigate under a crowd of sail, and nearly becalmed, left no doubt on his mind that she was in pursuit of an enemy. This was quite irresistible; the prospect of a bit of worldly glory at once superseded for a time all other considerations: he dissolved the congregation by quitting the pulpit in haste, and proceeding to the beach, in a few minutes he was on board his privateer, and under weigh to join in the chase [1].

[1] "This was like the Cornish Vicar," observes Mr. Coleridge, in alluding to a similar transaction which occurred with the same

The use of his sweeps, and the aid of a light breeze which prevailed near the land, gave Audain great advantage in the pursuit over the frigate in a calm, and he presently disappeared behind the headland which forms one side of the harbour's mouth. Many persons ascended the heights to get a view of the anticipated fight, and the report of firing announced to those in the Road Town, whose speculations were upon tiptoe, that the conflict had begun. Audain was the first to board, and followed by his men, he was master of the prize before the frigate came within hail, and when she approached he was required to repair on board. He was not long in settling the point to his own satisfaction, that some-

individual at Dominica. "He was preaching one afternoon in a sea-side church during a heavy south-west gale, when all on a sudden his audience began to move, take down their hats and press towards the door. The Vicar, having the advantage of pulpit eminence and long experience, immediately perceived the cause, and animated with a just indignation at their conduct, ordered them, as they valued their souls' welfare, to remain quiet till the end of the sermon. The good man, in his eagerness to restrain them, even left the pulpit, and, like Aaron, ran into the midst of the congregation, rebuking them and exhorting them, till he reached the porch; when, tucking up his gown under his arm, he shouted out, 'Now, my boys, let us start fair!'—and immediately scampered off, with his flock at his heels, to administer Cornish relief to a distressed merchantman."

thing on the score of courtesy, and respect to the national flag, was due from him, although not so ready to yield admission that the frigate had a right of participation in the prize, without having shared in the fight. Upon reaching the quarter-deck, he encountered in Captain B——d, an old shipmate in the days of his nautical minority, and after mutual inquiries, congratulations, retrospections, and so forth, it was arranged that Audain should act as prize-master and prize-agent, to have the capture adjudicated in the Admiralty Court of Tortola. The frigate proceeded on her cruize, the prize was ultimately condemned and sold, and the proceeds, "errors and omissions excepted," were sufficient—*to pay the expenses.*

An auction in the West Indies! We must shut our eyes for a few minutes to enjoy a supplementary laugh within us, in bringing before us the visions of former days,—of the many-coloured and grotesque groups we have seen emulating each other in competition for a bargain, regardless of the injunctions of poor Richard, and bent only upon possessing some article of him who died yesterday, or of him who had come within the merciless grasp of the law. Unfortunately in all small commu-

nities no man is allowed to know half as much of his affairs as those who have no right to meddle with them, and in the West Indies they are mostly known to every body but himself: so much so, that he is often surprised at learning by a side wind that he wrote to England by the last packet for the purpose of supplanting another in an appointment; that he is going to be married, or that he has had a sudden attack of fever, and that his virtues only became known to the community after his reported decease. An auction represents a benefit for gossips and an outlet for scandal. Every article will have its history from the date of its purchase, or first introduction into the colony, down to the lamentable occasion that is to transfer it to other hands; and even the negroes, who love a sensation from whatever source it may spring, if they cannot share in the luxury of nodding at an auctioneer, and waiting the critical moment that is to declare them or their competitors the possessors of an article they covet, they are no less interested in the fiat of the arbitrator, or in the witty interpolations which usually garnish his discourse.

The auction-room was in the vicinity of the burial-ground: Audain had mounted the rostrum, and was expatiating on the merits of each succeeding lot, now and then provoking a laugh from his auditors by a ludicrous suggestion, a double entendre, or quaint witticism, but invariably observing a dignified demeanour the moment he found his rhetoric had failed to induce another bidding, and that his hammer was to pronounce his decision. He had frequently looked at his watch as the sale proceeded, as if marking the progress of time towards another engagement; and as it drew to a close, it was evident, by the rapidity of his movements and the urgency of his demeanour, that he wished it terminated. This was more apparent from the frequency of his directing his attention through a window to some object outside, until at length arriving at the last lot, he gave solemn assurance that he could not "dwell;" and having pronounced those prophetic words, "*going, going, going,*" still having his eye askance toward the window, the sound of the hammer seemed to give impetus to his movements, and to declare him *gone*, for he disappeared in a moment.

The object which had engaged his attention was a passing funeral, and it suddenly brought to his recollection that he had been required to perform the ceremony of burial himself. Mortified at being supplanted in his professional vocation, it was with difficulty he could suppress the workings of his inward man, and his eye followed, and his proceedings kept pace with the procession till it reached the grave; and as the hammer gave emphatic decision to the contest for the last lot, the crowd had assembled round the appointed receptacle for the remains of the deceased. Hither Audain proceeded, and he reached the spot just as his rival commenced the service and uttered the words, "I am the resurrection"—"Stand aside," said Adain, "I am the resurrection!" and he proceeded with the ceremony, with the utmost composure whilst the assembled crowd gaped wild astonishment, and his discomfited competitor remained as effectually paralysed as if the Falls of Niagara had that moment lodged on his devoted head.

The recital of this transaction does not redound much to the credit of Audain, or the society in

which he moved; and however we may be disposed to smile at the ludicrous associations it brings before us, we cannot refrain from reprobating such a profanation of decency. We must however, make allowance for the distorted medium through which the recital of it reached us, bearing in mind that whatever militates against the character of individuals, especially if placed in a field of competition within the circumscribed limits of a small community, invariably assumes an aggravated aspect, as it becomes a subject of frequent comment or animadversion;

> "For slander lives upon succession;
> For ever hous'd where it once gets possession."

If there was not less profanation in the union of his clerical and military functions, he had at least the influence of *example* to plead in extenuation, or to serve as an anodyne to his conscience; an instance of which, as related by *Du Tertre*, took place during a conflict between the French and the English at Saint Christopher in 1666. Father Boulogne, having put off the dress of his order, and habited himself as a cavalier, proceeded upon

horseback to the head of the battalion, animating the soldiers to fight courageously, assuring them that their cause was one of religion as well as state, because their enemies, the English, were heretics, and the palm of martyrdom would be given to those who fell in the battle. He then made them all kneel down, beg pardon for their sins, and gave them absolution. After the action was over, he again changed his dress, and as a friar administered the sacrament to the dying[1].

Audain, however, had higher authority, by which to justify himself. The Archbishop of Bourdeaux, a favorite sea-*officer* of Louis XIII. commanded the French fleet which defeated the Spaniards under Don Lopez de Hoyez, in 1638; and the exploits of another martial prelate, Don Antonio d' Acugna, Bishop of Zamora, are recorded by *Guevarra*, in his notice of the revolt excited by Juan de Padilla and others at Castile in 1520. But the star of Audain, which had culminated in the meridian of Tortola, began to wax dim.

"An acquaintance of mine," observes Mr. Cole-

[1] Du Tertre, tom. iv. p. 35, 36.—Southey's Chro. Hist. vol. ii. p. 63.

ridge, "met him one day in the streets of Basseterre, in Saint Kitts, surrounded by negroes, to whom he was distributing plantains, yams, potatoes, and other eatables, and holding private talk with them all by turns. Having caught my friend's eye, he came up to him and said, 'I'm going to smuggle all these —— rascals this evening, to Guadaloupe.' He did so in his schooner, but remained himself on shore. A privateer of Nevis captured the smuggler before she could get to her market. Audain became furious, went himself to Nevis, and challenged the owner of the privateer to fight. The challenge was not accepted, and Audain immediately posted the name of the recusant as that of a scoundrel, on the wall of the Court-house. He himself for two days kept watch upon the platform with a sword by his side, and four pistols stuck in his belt, to see if any one dared to touch the shields.

"He fitted out another schooner, and cruized in her himself. But fate was too heavy for him, though he struggled against it like a man. On the second day a large vessel was seen to leeward; he ascertained her to be a Spanish trader, and, supposing

her to be wholly unarmed, bore down on her as upon a certain prey. When he came within pistol shot, fourteen masked ports were opened, and as many guns pointed at him through them. Audain was obliged to strike in an instant, and with his carpenter, succeeded in secreting himself under some water-casks in the hold of his schooner. The Spaniards came on board, and cut every man in pieces, except Audain and the carpenter. These two lay all night under the casks, but in the morning, upon further search, their asylum was discovered. They were brought upon deck, and the Spaniards were upon the point of hewing them by inches, when their Captain exclaimed with rapidity, 'Hold all! this man's life is sacred, and the other's too for his sake.'—Audain had formerly done the Spaniard great service at Saint Thomas's, and it now saved his own and his carpenter's life."

At a subsequent period we find him living at St. Domingo, as a trader. He here managed to quarrel with two black general officers, whom he challenged, and shot them both severely. Christophe sent for him, and told him that if either of them died, he would hang him on the tamarind tree

before his own door. So Audain, who had little hopes of their recovery, thought it advisable to attempt to secure his life by escape, which he effected by night in an open boat.

He had fought thirteen duels, and was a good boxer.—"Once upon a time," says Mr. Coleridge, "he fired twice without hitting; upon which he threw the pistol on the ground, and said sternly to his second, 'Take care that does not happen again!' supposing his pistol had not been charged with ball. A delay occurred in re-loading for a third time, upon which Audain went up to his antagonist, squared his body, and saying, 'something between, something between, good Sir!'—knocked him down with a flush hit on the nose."

At an auction we witnessed in the Road Town the number of negroes perhaps exceeded that of the white and coloured portion of the assemblage, and we were naturally led to inquire into that apparent independence in the use of their time, which their attendance seemed to bespeak—some of them were freemen, who obtained a livelihood by fishing, or by different habits of handicraft; others were slaves who were let out on hire as domestics,

or retained in the service of those to whom they belonged; and several were persons who had been forfeited to the crown, and had become protégés of government, under the denomination of "African apprentices:"—but none of the obligations, which their several situations had imposed upon them, could restrain their curiosity to be present at a "sensation." Most of the latter certainly bore the stamp of extreme indigence and depravity, sufficient to confirm the reputed viciousness of their character. They were under the immediate guardianship of the collector of the customs, who was empowered to apprentice them as artificers or servants to such of the inhabitants as might wish for their services; but an inherent disposition to indulge in idleness, favoured by the facility of gaining a subsistence by fishing and petty theft, rendered most of them incorrigible. Their African features were strongly contrasted with those of the creole negroes.—Apropos, of that word *creole*:—It has been too commonly understood to signify a native of mixed blood or coloured complexion, and several dictionaries have supported this erroneous acceptation. The word is of Spanish origin, signifying any

person, whether white, yellow, or black, born in a colony: whence the term a creole negro, in contradistinction to one of African origin, or a creole horse, or other animal, bred on a plantation, and not imported—in short, it bears a synonymous signification with the word "native," and standing by itself, expressly implies a white person of European and unmixed origin, and born in a colony—the conjunction of the word *mulatto* alone giving it the definition it has usually borne.

Pelicans are fond of fish, and they naturally resort to the best market. We have already noticed that the neighbouring seas afford an abundant supply of the finny tribe, and the pelicans are proportionately numerous on the coasts. A few gawlings, sparrowhawks, and wild pigeons, were the only birds that particularly claimed our attention. Flora had departed the island, and the humming-birds had followed in her train.

CHAPTER XIV.

BIRTH-DAY SALUTATIONS—RATIONS—CHARACTER OF THE NEGROES—THEIR CONDITION—HISTORICAL SKETCH.

"But to subdue th' unconquerable mind,
To make one reason have the same effect
Upon all comprehensions; to force this
Or this man first to think as thou and I do,
Impossible! unless souls were alike
In all, which differ now like human faces."

Tamerlane.

"MASSA, me wish you joy—hope you lib long—God bless you, massa!"—"Thank you, thank you," said our host, in reply to the same or similar benedictions from the mouths of several negroes, as they passed the door of the dwelling at Mount Healthy, where we were standing. It was his birth-day, and he could only account for their gaining a knowledge of it, from having incidentally mentioned it in the presence of the house servants.

It was about noon, and the negroes were assembling in the vicinity of the Old Mill to receive their allowance of provisions, which was served to them twice in the week. We repaired thither to witness the proceeding, and to take a more minute inspection of their persons than we had yet had an opportunity of doing, in any other situation than at their labour in the field. Most of the women were seated in different detached positions, some at a greater distance from the serving-place, where, perhaps, a plot of grass or the shadows of the adjacent buildings afforded a more comfortable seat, and from a consciousness that some time would elapse before their turn would arrive, and they kept up a confabulatory hubbub, to the infinite amusement of some, and the pique of those who happened to be the laughing-stock.

Their names were called in turn from the roll list, but instead of retiring to their homes as soon as their allowance had been served, most of them resumed their seats, and continued their fun with such volubility and clamour, as to require frequent admonition from the overseer, in order that the succeeding names might be heard. The provisions

consisted of flour or meal made from the Indian corn, imported from America, and pickled herrings, which are usually shipped from England: and we observed that some of the negroes received a much greater proportion than others, which in some instances was the allowance of several individuals composing one family, or of those who were unable to attend from sickness or superannuation: and in others, it was the additional proportion to "*head* people," or those holding some responsible office, such as the carpenter, the cooper, the blacksmith, &c. Generally speaking, they were fine looking people, well formed, particularly the women, and only few of them bore in their features the peculiar characteristics of Africans, most of them having been born in the island, and many being of the second or third remove. We noticed a few cases of *hernia*,—the *rose*, and *elephantiasis*[1], and one or two cases of leprosy, but collectively they were a healthy people.

A medical practitioner in the Road Town, visited the estate twice in every week to attend such of

[1] An account of this singular disease may be found in Cullen's Nosology, p. 87.

them as might be sick, and a hospital to receive them stood in the vicinity of the works.

It was quite impossible that any person arriving from England for the first time, whose mind had been forcibly impressed with a sense of the manifold abuses and wanton cruelties proverbially incidental to a state of slavery, could form any correct conclusions from the very cursory view we had as yet taken of things, and notwithstanding we were invested with full power over the estates of our host, which gave us the privilege of investigating all the minutiæ of management, the fluctuating state of our mind, occasioned by feelings of delicacy towards him, and the conflicting evidence we had encountered, might have caused a false medium of observation, and left us, upon that conviction, under considerable embarrassment in effecting determinate conclusions.

We had now been several weeks in the island, and we had witnessed no act that could be said to emanate from the exercise of arbitrary power, or that could bear the semblance of cruelty. Were we then under a delusion?—were we the puppet of

intrigue and false appearances, concerted for the purpose of blinding our judgment, and obstructing us in any measures we might deem necessary to propose or to adopt, or were the particular estates in question differently conducted to those belonging to other proprietors in the island?—We had not as yet detected, in the appearance of other bodies of negroes, which we had passed in our journeys, any striking difference in their attire and general deportment, and no lack of similar demonstrations of cheerful respect when we passed close enough to receive their salutations. The conviction, however, that they were governed by the iron hand of *slavery*—that hydra-headed monster, which had been represented to us as tramping under foot all the sacred obligations of religion and morality, and pursuing the slave below the level of human beings—continued to sit as an incubus upon our reasoning, and to overbalance every ephemeral circumstance which might seem to render such a state tolerable. But it was not the *legal* condition of the slave that demanded our consideration so much as the abuses which were alleged to spring out of it, and we must confess that a powerful reaction had

taken place in our mind to controvert many of the statements which had been promulgated on the subject. Their *legal* condition was too clearly comprehended to require elucidation, or to present any feature that could captivate the affections, or plead for its perpetuation; but the fact could not have escaped the most careless observer of passing events, that the multifarious abuses with which the colonists had been charged, independently of those which might be supposed inherently consequent upon a system of slavery, had too frequently emanated from party-spirit or political intrigue in England, to warrant unqualified belief, from what we had as yet seen, that much base coin had not been confounded with intrinsic truth.

The properties of our host were deeply involved, and the creditors, clamorous for redress, had resorted to the dangerous expedient of placing them in Chancery, to prevent preferential satisfaction; thereby, as in most cases, protracting a settlement of their claims, and adding materially to the estate's incumbrances.

Brought up, from an early period, in the school of military life, and left too young to the dictates

of his own will, the proprietor did not possess a very capacious or well-regulated mind, and in most of his actions he was rather governed by impulse than by discretion. He came into possession of his estates at the time when West Indian property had passed the zenith of its prosperity, when most persons interested in it, imagined that like the sun, it had declined only to rise again with renewed splendour; and under this conviction he too readily yielded to the allurements of a gay life, and consequent extravagance, and by degrees relinquished the more circumscribed habits, and the professional notions of the soldier, for those of the "man of the town." Notwithstanding, however, he had shared in the general disappointment, and had since read deep lessons in the school of experience; he had not yet arrived at that era of his existence when, as the poet tells us, "Man knows himself a fool," but he had some time passed the period when he begins to suspect it. This was twelve years ago, and we much doubt if he have reformed his plan, with a wife and twelve children to assist him in his studies. At the time we speak of, he was a Benedick upon *furlough*, still persisting that the golden age of

the West Indians had not yet arrived, and with this idea he proposed to adopt a sugar hogshead for his coat of arms with "*Muscovado Resurgam*" for a motto.

With a mind thus constituted we might with reason suppose that he was not very competent to control an extensive West Indian property, and having, for the reasons we have assigned, neglected to introduce into his management those rigid principles of discipline which might have been expected to proceed from a person who had, early in life, been imbued with high notions of military subordination, he rather fell into the opposite extreme of indifference to those obligations which were required of him, as the person in whom centred the welfare and comfort of the people a state of slavery had made dependent upon him, and whose moral and intellectual stature placed them in the situation of children that required a preceptor. Still a prodigal, the negroes might perhaps be better fed and clothed than was customary on other estates, and possessing a cheerful and careless disposition himself, a corresponding feeling was probably diffused among

them; it was evident, however, that the operations of his mind were too circumscribed and changeable to comprehend and regulate details essential to such an undertaking, and under this persuasion we freely admitted that *we* also had yet much to learn.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

Tortola is the principal British possession among the Virgin Islands. It is situated nearly in the centre of the group which amounts to between forty and fifty, including many small islets and keys: of this number *Anegada*, and *Virgin Gorda*, are next in importance among those belonging to the English, the former of which is of much greater extent than Tortola, but cultivable only to a trifling extent, and very dangerous to approach, being surrounded by reefs and sunken rocks, and at high tides its coasts are inundated. The adjacent islands of *Saint Thomas* and *Saint John*, possessed by the Danes, are also of the group.

Sir Francis Drake sailed through them as early as 1580, and he is supposed by some writers to

have named them the Virgin Islands in honor of Queen Elizabeth, but it is quite clear that they were so called by Columbus in compliment to the eleven thousand Virgins in the Romish Ritual, and we have too much respect for the memory of those fair votaries of celibacy to allow them to be deprived of the honour intended them. Columbus named the largest of them, probably Tortola, or Virgin *Gorda*, *Saint Ursula*, after the patroness of the sisterhood, whence the name of the "Ursulines" has been also assigned to the whole group [1]. They were found uninhabited when the Earl of Cumberland visited them in 1596, in his way to attack Porto Rico, on which occasion, upon being urged to pass through the channel taken by Sir Francis Drake, he expressed his desire rather "to be the first that took Porto Rico, than the second that passed through the Virgines."

A party of Dutch buccaneers established themselves at Tortola in 1648, and built a fort for

[1] At Venice the disciples of Saint Ursula pretend that they have her head, and the heads of several of her companions; and at Cologne the order maintain that they have the body of their patroness entire. The pope ought to have set this matter right long ago.

their protection, but they were expelled by the English in 1666, and the island with its dependencies were soon afterwards annexed to the Leeward Island government by Charles II. in a commission to Sir William Stapleton. A grant of land in Tortola, from the baronet to one Thomas Bisse, bearing date the thirty-fourth year of that monarch's reign, is the earliest record in the Register's office of that island.

Notwithstanding the unpromising appearance of the country for cultivation, without one river and few springs of good water, the colonists persevered in their labours, until the loss of their cattle, which they had brought with them from *Anguilla*, would have obliged many to abandon the undertaking, but for the timely assistance of some merchants of Liverpool, by whom they were supplied with necessaries.

The mother country soon partook of the benefits arising from the persevering industry of the settlers. In a few years sugar canes were seen flourishing on the sides of the mountains, and indigo and ginger and cotton contributed also to increase the revenue of the crown. A provincial court had

been established, but by the management of some few self-interested individuals, it became an engine of injustice and oppression to the people. Nothing appeared to be of sufficient importance to revive the sinking credit of the inhabitants, but the establishment of some permanent laws, which should give at once security to property, and enable the creditor to recover his just demand, where honour and virtue had not a sufficient efficacy to discharge the obligation. On these considerations, the colonists began to entertain serious hopes that the British Government would place them on an equal footing with the neighbouring islands, by establishing among them a civil government, which would rescue them from their dependent state; and a formal request was made accordingly.

In 1773, the inhabitants presented a petition to his Majesty, through the Captain-general of the Leeward Islands, for permission to elect an Assembly of Representation, in order that they might frame proper laws for the public peace, welfare, and good government of the community, pledging themselves to grant to his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, an import of four and a half per cent. in specie upon

all goods and commodities, the growth and export of these islands, and a grant of 400*l.* currency per annum was passed at their first meeting, towards the salary of the Governor-general.

Until this period the judicial and legislative authority was exercised by the deputy governor, with a council nominated among themselves, and voluntary contributions were made, when absolutely necessary, to meet the public exigencies, as it appears, no taxes were imposed upon them. It may be presumed, that this form of government was not calculated to last long, and that a degree of disaffection would show itself with increase of prosperity; and although the physical importance of Tortola and its dependencies might have been considered comparatively insignificant with any other island in the government, it did not prevent the inhabitants from evincing a disposition to be placed upon the same footing, by the establishment of a civil government and constitutional courts of justice among them, at the expense of more than a proportional sacrifice to effect it.

Tortola has been declining for many years, in no inconsiderable degree from the natural poverty of

the soil, which might have classed it among the most unimportant of the British possessions in these seas, had not the eligibility of its situation, and the capaciousness of the anchorage, pointed it out as a suitable rendezvous for the homeward-bound shipping from the neighbouring settlements during the war, whence it became a place of considerable traffic, and for some time enjoyed peculiar privileges as a free port. As many as three and four hundred sail of vessels have occasionally assembled for convoy, within the magnificent basin in front of the town, sheltered by a chain of small islands to the southward, whose extended range forms, with the opposite shores of Tortola, the passage called "Sir Francis Drake's Channel."

The several bays and creeks with which the island and the adjacent keys abound, also afforded shelter to numerous privateers and small craft, and the frequent captures which were brought into Tortola by our cruizers for trial and condemnation, contributed in no inconsiderable degree to its resources and prosperity; but the termination of the war proved a sudden and serious check to them, and, in 1819, the hurricane of which we have spoken, may

be said to have given the final blow to its political importance. Commerce no longer appears to exist, save only by the two or three ships which visit the harbour annually to carry away the scanty produce of the island's impoverished soil, and the four and a half per cent. duty, an impost, which appears to have been very unfairly saddled on several of the West India colonies, together with the variable and fluctuating returns from this description of property, have necessarily led to the abandonment of many estates.

The colony had also shared in that formidable evil, the consequences of which have been seriously felt throughout the West Indies, namely, the absence of proprietors, which has led, in numerous instances, to mismanagement and abuse of power on the part of those appointed to act in their behalf, and consequently to their own embarrassment and ruin. Of about thirty estates in sugar cultivation, about half of that number were under the control of one individual, either as receiver in chancery, or attorney, and at the same time carrying on the business of a merchant.

The island contains about 13,300 acres, in an

area of about twelve miles in length, and three and a half at the broadest part, of which not one-fifth was in cultivation in 1815, in sugar, and cotton, and provisions[1].

[1] For statistical estimates, see Appendix D.

CHAPTER XV.

DEPARTURE FROM TORTOLA—A SMOKING COMPANION—NEGRO'S BOAT-SONG—TWILIGHT—ARRIVAL AT SAINT THOMAS'S—TROPICAL COMFORTS—CAVICHED FISH—MOSQUITO, THE BENEVOLENT JEW—CHARLOTTE AMALIA—BUCCANEER'S TOWER—MULATTO GIRLS—MAN O' WAR BUCKRA—HISTORICAL SKETCH.

"This fellow's wise enough to play the fool;
And to do that well, craves a kind of wit:
He must observe their mood on whom he jests,
The quality of person and the time."

Twelfth Night.

"BOAT A-HOY!" exclaimed a voice as we were about quitting the beach of *Brewer's Bay*, at the foot of Mount Healthy. Several persons were seen winding down a path on a hill-side, and while we rested on the oars of the boat in which we had embarked, a gentleman, attended by two negroes, approached to the water's edge. "*Monsieur, je vous prie de m' excuser*" said he, "*mais je crois que vous allez à Saint Thomas, en ce cas-là, voulez-vous*

me donner une place dans votre bateau?" Having been answered in the affirmative, he entered the boat with the haste which indicated, either fear of losing the opportunity afforded him, or of losing himself in making the attempt to secure it. His left hand was full of cigars—a lighted one was in his mouth, and his right hand was free for the guidance and preservation of his body, in making his way to a seat. The boat was of large dimensions, pulling six oars, and furnished with two lugger sails; she had been constructed principally for the purpose of communicating with Saint Thomas, and of bringing occasional supplies from thence for the use of the estates belonging to our host.

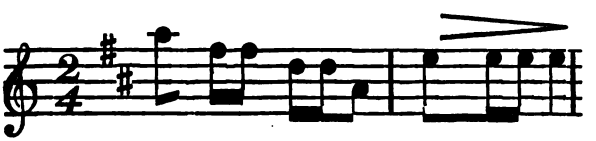
The weather was beautifully serene and the sea calm, and as we pulled along shore, our attention was engaged, and our admiration excited, by the beauty and variety of detached scenes which opened upon us one after another, between the bluff points or headlands which project into the sea, forming little bays or deep coves, the termination of precipitous water-courses or ravines, or of less secluded and gently undulating valleys. A light breeze now and then came down from the mountains

loaded with odours emitted from the aromatic plants and shrubs in the woodlands, and at times, with sufficient strength to swell the bosom of the sails which were hoisted to afford the boatmen a short cessation from the labour of rowing: calms again and again intervened, the sails were again lowered, the boatmen resumed their labour, and

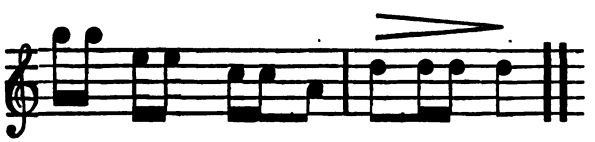
"Their voices kept tune and their oars kept time."

For some distance they had pulled at an easy rate and in silence, as if made unconscious of the work they were engaged in, by the absorbing interest of the passing scenes, but at length they were roused to activity by the word of preparation for a song having been passed among them, and the negro pulling the oar nearest to us, began a singular prelude which sounded between a grunt and a groan, like a paviour's accompaniment to his labour, or the exordium of a quaker, when "the spirit" begins to move. He became more energetic with each succeeding stroke of the oar, which produced a corresponding ardour, and greater precision in pulling among the other rowers, and when this was effected, another negro, whose countenance bore

the stamp of much covert humour and sagacity, and who appeared to be a sort of *improvisatore* among them, commenced a lively strain which accorded exactly in time with the motion of pulling, each line of the song accompanying the impetus given to the boat, and the whole crew joining in chorus in the intervals between every stroke of the oars. The subject matter of the song was as discursive and lengthy as Chevy Chase; and it showed an aptitude at invention on the part of the leader, as well as a tolerable acquaintance with the weak side of human nature, on the score of flattery: a small portion of it will suffice. The words in italics form the chorus.



Hur - ra, my jol - ly boys, *Fine time o' day.*



We pull for San Tha-mas boys, *Fine time o' day.*

San Thamas hab de fine girl,
Fine time o' day.
Nancy Gibbs and Betsy Braid,
Fine time o' day.

Massa cum fra London town,
Fine time o' day.
Massa is a hansome man,
Fine time o' day.
Massa is a dandy-man,
Fine time o' day.
Him hab de dollar, plenty too,
Fine time o' day.
Massa lub a pretty girl,
Fine time o' day.
Him lub 'em much, him lub 'em true,
Fine time o' day.
Him hunt 'em round de guaba bush,
Fine time o' day.
Him catch 'em in de cane piece,
Fine time o' day, &c.

A long streak of rippling water at length approached us from the shore, as if agitated by some monster of the deep floating on the surface. The sails were again hoisted to receive the current of wind which occasioned it, and in something less than "no time at all," a few heavy gusts followed, which caused us to look to the sheets and down with the helm. "*Santa Maria, Mère de Dieu! priez pour nous pauvres pécheurs!*" muttered our Gallic companion, who had hitherto shown no symptoms of loquacity, and in evident alarm that betokened a sceptical feeling on the score of his safety, he attempted to lay hold of the sheet which

had been purposely loosened to save us from an upset. He had smoked most immoderately from the time he entered the boat; and his consumption of tobacco was now increased in proportion to his estimate of danger every time the boat heeled to the wind, until at length he unconsciously dispensed with a light at one end of his cigar, whilst with the other, he

> Suck'd and puff'd, and suck'd and puff'd in vain,
> Bit off the end, and bit—and suck'd again.

In this way he consumed cigar after cigar; and, by the time the supply was exhausted, fear and sea-sickness had buried his senses within himself. We had now gained the extreme end of the island, and entered upon the open sea to windward of us, with the wind blowing fresh through the channel between Tortola and Saint Thomas. Monsieur had muttered his Pater Noster, and, without absolution, he resigned himself to the bottom of the boat.

The interval of twilight in the tropics is beautiful; but like most beautiful things, transitory and evanescent; the sun yielding her dominion to the influence of night without an interregnum. We watched his departure beneath the western horizon

—the moon was already in the heavens, and a splendid retinue of stars attended her in her orbit, dancing their silvery beams on the rippling waters.

The air became as chilly as it had been oppressive from the heat only a few hours before, and by the time we had advanced into mid-channel, the circulation of the blood at the extremities became marvellously relaxed.

The broad forms of the island we had left became more and more faint, and the one to which we were proceeding more dense and defined, as we gradually receded from the one and approached the other. At length, a light appeared for a moment a-head of us, and was then lost so quickly as to leave a doubt on the mind if we had really seen it—it appeared again and again—now another, and another, and with greater brightness. The shadows and character of hills began to break the dense massy form of the whole outline, changing their features as we changed their bearings in our progress through the water; the sound of the breaking and recoiling surf, of the distant watch-dog, and the human voice, broke at intervals and in varied cadences on our ears, and as we bore away

into the harbour of Saint Thomas, a sonorous and imperative voice through a speaking-trumpet, demanding whence we came, and the purpose of our presence, reached us from the fort which commands the entrance.

It was near midnight—the lights in the town were not numerous, and the broad shadows of the adjacent hills, and the masts and rigging of numerous vessels which lined the beach, threw obscurity over the houses. We glided gradually past a great number of shipping to the landing-place, with all those sensations within us, which seldom fail to affect a person upon visiting a place for the first time, and they were sensibly heightened by the restraint which night imposed upon our curiosity, and the silence and stillness of so many animate objects around us.

We were conducted to a tavern kept by *Betsy Cuyler*, we beg her pardon, *Miss* Betsy Cuyler, whither also our Gallic passenger was conveyed in a state of irreversible obmutescence; and, after divers knocks and exhortations to gain admittance, a sable somnambulist, for he was yet at least *half* asleep, and that was the *upper* half, ushered us into a room,

whose dimensions were scarce to be discerned through the darkness made visible, by a dim mutton-candle which he held in his hand, and we were obliged to wait patiently in utter darkness, until he could tenant it in a candlestick *pro tem.* whilst others could be provided. Supper was indispensable. Miss Betsy made her appearance to contribute to our wants, and with a "*dispatch* cock," a misnomer in this instance, for an hour elapsed before it appeared—with some grilled ham and bottled porter, we did the agreeable to ourselves with tolerable *éclat;* and we were soon afterwards netted from the mosquitos.

The heat of a tropical climate soon reconciles one to a hard mattress, in preference to a soft feather bed; and the sanguinary disposition of the mosquitos, equally disposes to submission in being barricadoed with a netting around the bedstead, although the sensation is at first unpleasant. It requires a tolerable share of practised dexterity to prevent the intrusion of one or more of those little blood-suckers within the curtains, for they have sufficient sagacity sometimes to conceal themselves in the inner folds of the drapery, so as to escape

the attention of your femme de chambre; and in retiring to rest, it behoves thee to lift the netting with caution, and to insinuate thyself within its folds, in such a manner as to prevent their entrance at the same time. The comforts and coziness of a well-furnished, carpeted room, appear to a new comer, no trifling desideratum among tropical comforts, but they are rendered superfluous by the climate, and inadmissible from the multitudes of insects and vermin which infest the dwellings; whence every indispensable article of furniture is so constructed as to afford them as little shelter as possible.

Miss Betsy was more liberal in providing the "*repast of ease*" in the morning, and "*cavished*" fish, which the West Indians manage with exquisite regard to the palate, was one of the several dishes which graced her breakfast-table. We marvel much that this excellent plan of serving up fish *cold*, has not been introduced commonly in England. The process of frying it, and afterwards steeping it in vinegar, with some green capsicums and spices, and a flavour of garlic, is simple; and the compound may be preserved in jars for a great length of time. We confess a *gusto* for the thing.

The *remains* of Monsieur, whose mind had been wrecked in the gulf of dim oblivion, had been decently interred under our own inspection and guidance, the night before; or, in the words of a parody parodied:—

> We placed him in bed—and he never spoke,
> Not e'en to the landlady's daughter;—
> But soundly he slept, and when he awoke,
> He call'd for some soda-water!

He now entered the room as brisk as the effervesing draught he had swallowed, uttered a score of thanks for his passage and safe deliverance, imagined that he had had a miraculous escape from drowning, and concluded by observing, with an eloquent shrug of the shoulders, "*la vie n'est qu'une bagatelle, mais cependant on n'aime pas à la quitter.*"

We had scarce reached the landing-place in our purpose of inspecting the town, when we were accosted by a very singular looking character in the person of "*Mosquito*, the *Benevolent Jew*," a man possessing a mind which either naturally, or by the test of experience, appeared at perfect ease with itself and with all mankind, and as little averse as can well be imagined, to all those varied and uncertain occurrences of life peculiar to a state of de-

pendence. His familiarity was at first offensive, until we were told to regard him as "a *character*" worthy of being humoured, and certainly his figure, dress, and address, were sufficiently characteristic of singularity to entitle him to attention. He might have been taken for a being of another century, who had walked out of the catacombs; his reputed age, indeed, considerably above a hundred years, together with the antiquated details of his person and attire, were rather calculated to establish such a conclusion, and to remind one of the man mentioned by Roger Bacon, who by help of a certain medicine had attained the age of 900, or of John Buttadaens, the Wandering Jew, who is said to have been present at the crucifixion, and was alive in the fifteenth century.

The countenance of Mosquito beamed with intelligence, and if it were not of a sterling character, it gave the stamp of beneficence to features designed by nature to claim respect. He wore a light blue coat of a thin stuff, similar to that worn by butchers in England, the seams of which, by wear and exposure to the sun, had become nearly white, and the general texture might be denomi-

nated threadbare; a black silk handkerchief was tied round his neck, more for the purpose of keeping the collar of his shirt close, than that of covering a long sinewy neck; his waistcoat of white calico hung loose round his body with a few articles in the pockets as specimens of his simple trading, and tight nankeen small-clothes, and coarse cotton stockings, clothed a pair of thin meagre limbs;—under his hat he wore a skull-cap of white calico, which partly covered his ears. He accosted us thus:—"Well, youngster, how are you off for soap? this is the place for vegetating and running to *seed;* eh! *ecce signum,*" looking at the elbows of his coat, "you're on your travels, I suppose, without a Young Man's Best Companion in your pocket?" "And pray what is that?" we demanded. "Why you're *green;*—look y' here, (taking a *cork-screw* from his pocket,)—there's a genuine Brummegam to draw the long corks of your Burgundy—never travel without a cork-screw;—come, you shall have it cheap!—Do you want any lavender-water?—there's a sample of the real '*Smyth and Nephew,*'—touch your cambric with it, and you'll catch skylarks in petticoats—any brown windsor to keep your hands white?—rings for your

keys, goose-quill tooth-picks, court-plaister, a pair of skaits, steel fish-hooks,—I know you love fish,"—and so on, *hic et ubique.* He afterwards called on us at the tavern, at a moment when we were engaged playing a quick tune on the flute. He entered without ceremony, and throwing his hat from him, commenced dancing and snapping his fingers with violent gesticulations.

We continued playing, increasing the time, and he increased the activity of his motions, bringing his feet to the ground in tolerable accordance. We expected that he would be tired first, but we were mistaken, and at length we laid down the instrument to engage him in another cause,—that of taking his portrait: he was proud of the proposal,

and we were anxious to get a sketch of so celebrated a character, and of a face in particular that was worthy of a better artist. He seated himself in such an attitude as he considered most interesting and imposing, placing his large hat on his head in a "knowing" position, and assuming an air of dignified composure. This preliminary was no sooner accomplished, than he intimated his intention of taking a cigar from a number that lay on the table, and suiting the action to the word by selecting *two*, he forced the whole length of them up each nostril, without any apparent pain or inconvenience, observing as he did it, that he dispensed with the trouble of puffing, and saved fire on the score of economy.

This singular character had been long known as an itinerant pedlar among the islands, but chiefly in the Dutch and Danish colonies, and he was admitted as a privileged person, with as little ceremony as he entered, into the houses of the most respectable inhabitants. He generally manifested great good humour, and, considering his age, a remarkable flow of animal spirits and activity. In his dealings he was more remarkable for a playful

attempt to procure custom, than for a desire to impose upon the credulity of his customers, and it was generally supposed that he had long since placed himself above the reach of want. His domestic habits were no less singular than those of a more public and ordinary character, such as sleeping on a wet mattrass, and other odd things.

Poor Mosquito is now dead—but he must live in the memory of many persons who have visited the Leeward Islands:—behold him here!—

Charlotte Amalia, the town of St. Thomas, is

situated on three conical hills of nearly equal elevation and corresponding form, and it is well defended by the adjacent heights, on which stand some well constructed fortresses, commanding the harbour and shipping. On the middle hill is a tower, which is said to have been built by a Buccaneer chieftain, perhaps by that renowned or notorious warrior and cut-throat *Blackbeard.* It bears evident marks of former strength, and is probably only a small portion of the original structure. Close to it, at this time was the residence of Mr. Gamble, the American Consul, with whom we sojourned some days with infinite satisfaction on the score of good cheer and genuine hospitality. The Americans carry on considerable trade here, it being a free port, open to all nations, and consequently a great entrepôt for articles of plantation consumption, such as timber, corn, and corn meal, the great staples of the North American continent.

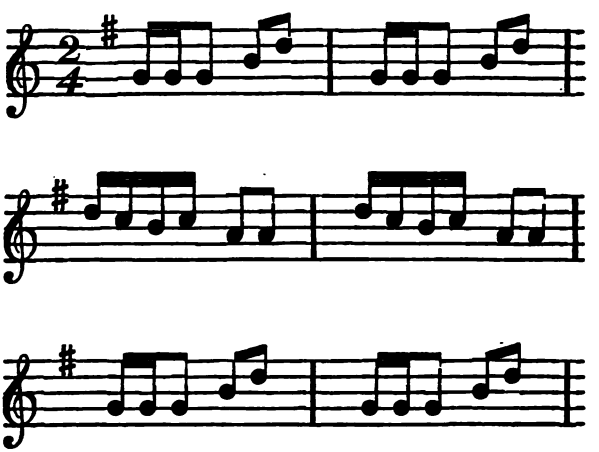
A singular fatality has attended the town by frequent and devastating fires, and on two or three occasions, it has been nearly wholly destroyed by that element. The general aspect of the place presented a striking superiority over the Road

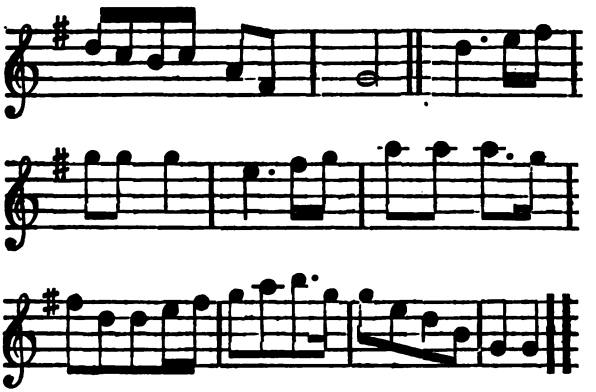
Town at Tortola, and we were disposed to compare it to some populous commercial town in the Italian states. Many of the houses are built of stone and brick, of several stories in height, with galleries in front, and decorated with carving and ornaments. They are tiled in the Dutch fashion, some of them with chimneys, an unusual feature in the ordinary construction of West Indian habitations, which are without fire-places, and have their kitchens detached. There was also an air of cleanliness and comfort about them from the application of paint. Street lamps were also in use, suspended in some places by a line from one side to the other, in the manner common on the European continent. The heat was excessive, owing in great measure to the reflection from the stone buildings and pavement. All the activity and bustle of commerce pervaded the streets, and the harbour was crowded with shipping, bearing the flags of different nations. Nevertheless, trade was much depressed compared to what it had been a few years previous. French was principally spoken.

The number of coloured people was very considerable, and the ladies of this class in particular

appeared to have flocked hither to participate in all the immunities of a "*free* port." Many of them were natives of Tortola, expatriated probably by the prohibitory ordinances of the law-givers of that island. The figures of some of them were really splendid models of symmetry, and they appeared marvellously conceited of themselves. Certes, an artist might come hither to study the "*fine arts*" to advantage. Notwithstanding many of them walk well, they have most of them a peculiarity in their action which indicates an affectation of ease carried into negligence, and which by no means accords with ordinary notions of elegance or good taste—their arms and fingers are thrown abroad, and they carry their legs too wide apart, with a swing of the body as they proceed, in a manner which altogether warrants us in terming it sprawling into attitude, and their action when seated is equally indicative of lassitude or laziness, and a desire to relieve sudation at the expense of a scrupulous exactness in some of the observances essential to "coming out." Their teeth are beautifully white and well formed, and the gums have a fine healthy red imparted to them by the wild cane which they use to clean

them. They will sit for an hour or two rubbing their teeth with the end of a piece of the cane which forms a coarse brush—and humming a tune, mostly in a high pitch, stopping only occasionally to drawl out a monosyllable or a lacadaisical sentence. Their affectation and conceit among themselves, would be quite insufferable, if they were not reciprocal. An air, well known in the West Indies, called "*Man o' War Buckra,*" appeared to be popular among them at this time, probably revived in compliment to the crews of two or three Men of War that lay in the harbour. It was something in this way:—





The Governor of the Island, *Von Scholten*, was very much respected by the inhabitants, and his recipé for gaining popularity, is worthy adoption by all Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, and Commanders-in-Chief of his Britannic Majesty's colonies. He appeared a great deal in public—condescended to *walk* in the streets, to visit the shops—was courteous to all—studied the conveniencies and comforts of the residents, even to interdicting the keeping of pigeons in the town, because they injured the rain water—the principal supply of the inhabitants—or choked the spouts that conveyed it. He gave excellent dinners to the *aristocracy*, without seeming to admit a distinction—built a theatre at his own expense—held *conversaziones*

twice a week for "mixed company"—smoked a profusion of cigars, and made himself as happy as man could well be in endeavouring to spend an excellent income.

His private room, or study, was opposed in all its arrangements, or rather derangements, to the order and etiquette of Downing-street. It was the perfection of official disorder. The principal portion of his income was derived from the office of way-master, or intendant of the customs, which alone amounted to upwards of 30,000 dollars a year, from an impost laid upon all vessels entering, and departing from the harbour.

The soil of Saint Thomas is deplorably bad, and there are very few estates in sugar cultivation, compared with its extent, seldom producing more than 2000 hogsheads annually—but quantities of vegetables and fruit grace an excellent market in the town, which is also well supplied with meat.

The island, and the neighbouring island of Saint John, are under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Santa Cruz, which lies in a southerly direction, distance about thirty miles, admitting of daily communication between them, by small sailing passage-

boats. Previously to 1672, when it was settled by the Danes, this island had been the resort of a few English adventurers, who had cleared some portion of the ground for cultivation—but many years elapsed before the colony acquired an independent footing. In 1763 the Danish government declared it a free port for all American produce, but European goods were only to be admitted in Danish bottoms.

It has shared, at different periods, in the calamitous consequences attendant upon hurricanes; and in that which devastated most of the neighbouring islands in 1772, it sustained damage to the amount of 200,000 dollars.

In 1801 it was taken by the English, but it was restored to the Danes in the following year; and in 1807 it again surrendered to the British forces, and remained in our possession until 1815, when it reverted to the Danish crown.

And now for Santa Cruz.

CHAPTER XVI.

SANTA CRUZ—CHRISTIANSTADT—BANANAS AND PLANTAINS—ROADS—FACE OF THE COUNTRY—LAW AND LAWYERS—POLICY OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT—DROUGHT—PROTECTION OF THE NEGROES—MORAVIANS AND WESLEYANS—RATTOONS—TROPICAL EVENINGS—MUSIC—HISTORICAL SKETCH.

"But these sweet thoughts do even refresh my labours;
Most busy-less, when I do it."

Tempest.

We quitted the harbour of Saint Thomas about sunset, with a light breeze, and passed the greater part of a lovely night on the deck of the Mary packet. In the morning we found the island of Santa Cruz before us, but we had got considerably to leeward of our course, and had to beat to windward to gain the harbour of *Christianstadt*, which we did not reach till eleven in the forenoon.

The appearance of the *north* side of the island from the sea is very fertile and pleasing, but it does

not present the bold and picturesque outline which characterizes more mountainous and woody scenery, the hills being of no great elevation.

Christianstadt, or *Basin*, the principal town, lies in this direction. It is extremely well built, and on a larger scale than the town of Saint Thomas. The houses are chiefly composed of stone, and many of those in the principal streets possess an air of elegance and substance which bespeak the opulence and respectability of the community. The streets are capacious, and some of them paved, and the shops, or stores as they are more commonly called, promise abundance of all the necessaries the most fastidious purchaser might require to gratify his wants; but there was infinitely less bustle and appearance of traffic than we witnessed at Saint Thomas, for the obvious reason of the latter being a free port. Nevertheless, the place bore all the outward features of considerable commercial importance and great internal resources, although the stamp of fallen credit was very apparent. The number of inhabitants was estimated at 5000.

From the anchorage the town has a very imposing effect, some portion of it rising on the acclivi-

ties of hills in the back-ground, which are relieved by a number of fruit trees growing in the vicinity. From the summit of one of these hills, called *Laings*, an extensive view is obtained, embracing the distant mountains of *Porto Rico*, and several of the *Virgins*. We were no less interested in the view from the quay, where a number of negroes had assembled to sell their vegetables and poultry, and others were employed loading and unloading the vessels in the harbour, or those of smaller dimensions secured along-side the wharfs. One of the latter, bearing a Spanish flag, had a cargo of *bananas* and *plantains* brought from Porto Rico, which indicated a scarcity of that fruit in Santa Cruz, but the unusual size of them probably afforded a preference that made them profitable to the importer. They were esteemed the largest that had ever been seen, some of them measuring eighteen inches in length [1].

[1] The *banana* and *plantain* are of quick growth, and in some islands constitute a valuable portion of the negroes' food, particularly the latter, which they prefer, usually dressing it unripe as a vegetable, or sliced and roasted as a substitute for bread.

There is no great difference in the appearance of the banana and plantain, either in the tree or fruit, the leaves of the former are smaller and the stem darker, and the fruit, which grows like a

The harbour of Christianstadt is of difficult access, owing to a reef which runs nearly across the entrance, which is defended by a fort of no great strength.

We were hospitably received by Mr. H——, an old and highly respected resident proprietor, who possessed extensive estates in the country, an excellent residence in town, inveterate gout, a progeny of bachelor's children, a host of lazy servants, who neglected every thing from an aptitude in discovering each other's duties in preference to their own, and long-tailed horses, that knew no other office than conveying their master in his carriage about once a month to his estates, eating plenty of corn, and wheezing with fat.

a bundle of sausages, is shorter and thicker than the plantain, and stands out from the stem in clusters. It is also sweeter when ripe, and has a sharper taste than the plantain; the flavour of both may be compared to that of a full ripe Windsor pear.

Strange conceits have been entertained respecting this fruit; the banana, when cut transversely, has been said to represent in the heart of it, the figure of our Saviour on the cross, but fancy must have great licence to make it out; and the plantain, if *Goropius* and others are to be credited, is the apple of Paradise, with the leaves of which Adam manifested his transgression. It was introduced into Hispaniola in 1516, by Thomas de Berlanga, a Dominican, who carried it from the Canaries.

To such a person an occasional *billet* under his roof must have proved eminently felicitous. It served to dispel lethargy and blue devils, which usually act in the advance, when gout assails the region of the stomach, and if an extra bottle or *two* caused a few additional twinges at the extremities, which were nothing in the scale of enjoyment, calomel and jalap were always at hand to act as auxiliaries in keeping the assailant in check.

His children too had a licence to be more than usually noisy, his servants abused each other with less restraint, and his horses imagined they were again young, and undergoing a second initiation in the break.

We fared sumptuously off turtle, and tolerable mutton, drank Champagne, old Madeira, Chateau-Margôt, and Tinta, saw every body and every thing, kept our host from his bed an hour or two after *sunset*, disturbed him in his 'beauty sleep' to join us in hot suppers, and in three weeks effectually cured his horses of the grease, by giving them more exercise and fresh air than they had enjoyed for at least as many years.

The excellence of the roads, which are all of established width from 24 to 30 feet, and as straight as an arrow, with a surface that might bear comparison with Mac-Adam's idol, the *Bristol Trust*, inspired us with a disposition to emulate Young Rapid, and to keep moving. And there was novelty in the aspect of the country: instead of craggy acclivities, and towering pinnacles, ravines, and glens, and dells, slight undulations only here and there circumscribed the landscape; and all the roads intersecting each other at right angles, might be said to give the appearance of a chequer-board within the confines of an indented oval. There are three principal roads, which run from east to west equidistant from each other, having in some parts, stone walls on either side, and rows of *cedars*, and *acacias*, and *cocos*, and *mammes*, and *Æschynomenes*, here and there planted alternately, to afford relief to the eye as well as an agreeable shade. The mamme, or *mamme-sapota*, is a splendid tree, lofty, and shady, and green, shooting up to a pyramidal figure, and producing, once a year, a large fruit, which hath an exquisite smell, greatly superior to the taste. The French call it *l'apricot*

de Saint Domingue. It contains one or two large stones, which are used to givea ratafia flavour to spirits, and one of the best West Indian cordials, called *l'eau des noiaux*, is made from it. The fruit eaten raw is indigestible, but it makes an exquisite conserve. The botanical name is *Achras.*

The island was originally divided into square portions of 150 acres, so that the number of acres possessed by any one person is in proportion to the number of allotments; and there are several extensive properties so formed. The "Great Princess" estate of Count Schimmelmann, about four miles from Christianstadt, is among the number: it has two large windmills built close to each other, and buildings of corresponding importance, to meet the exigencies of a large crop. The works on the estate of Mr. Macavoy are also of very superior construction.

At this time most of the estates were under Government loans, and the proprietors were frequently subjected to oppressive proceedings, more particularly exercised towards the English, who formed a large portion of the community. They were denied the exercise of discretion in the ship-

ment of their produce, and were compelled to send it to Denmark, which often circumscribed their means by depriving them of a better market. A more liberal policy has since been admitted, and much of the best sugar finds its way to America in exchange for supplies.

Taxes on horses, carriages and carts, were imposed to assist the Government, and stamps on legal instruments, &c. and there was no lack of lawyers and litigants, in favour of the circulating medium, at a time when the scarcity of cash was so great, that we marvelled much at having to pay a premium for *change*. The code of Christian V. of Denmark, together with the edicts or rescripts of the King, constitute their law. The code itself is simple, but the superstructure of legal practice is sufficiently complex for the most determined litigant, who is allowed to enjoy the problematical experiment of an appeal from the highest Court in the island to the high court at Copenhagen, whose decision is final.

Those lawyers only who have studied at Copenhagen are admitted to practice in the supreme court; but there were several gentlemen of the

profession who had not been so initiated, and whose education was not altogether suitable to their pretensions.

The Government is vested in a Governor-general, whose jurisdiction extends to the other Danish Islands, and two councillors; there is also the "Burgher council," consisting of seven members, all nominated by the governor, who at this time was an Admiral in the Danish Navy; a very good sort of personage, notwithstanding there was a party opposed to his studying natural history, and to his enjoying the innocent recreation of *dissecting* and *stuffing*.

We saw very few birds in our rides: the wild pigeon, a small hedge-sparrow, and the ground-dove, and a singular looking blackbird that frequented the roads, somewhat larger than the English blackbird, but with an awkward gait, made up of a hop, a run, and a fly, (like Wisdom in haste,) which gave an interest to the name of the "*black witch*:" were all that particularly engaged our attention, besides a few sparrow-hawks.

The heat was every where oppressive, and vegetation was languishing under severe drought,

but it was plethoric, and pregnant with liberal intent. Rain was needed to assist her in her operations, but it came not; and the sun made many journeys to the Antipodes, and came back again, before succour was afforded her,—like the tardigradous impulses of *charity*, which too often, in effect, prolong rather than mitigate the miseries of the necessitous, by yielding relief too late.

The few springs in the island afford only a scanty supply of water for the ordinary purposes of life, and wood is also scarce.

The planters mourned the protracted drought, as well on account of the *ensuing* crop, as the present one. Subjected to repeated disappointments, they were reasonably sanguine of a good season, once in every *seven* years, and five years had elapsed since they had received a liberal recompense for their labours. In 1816, the island produced between 44, and 46,000 hogsheads; this year it yielded only 12,000, and their cattle suffered much from want of water, and insufficiency of pasture. There was also a defalcation in the ground provisions, but not to the prejudice of the negroes, for in times of scarcity the Government

required a weekly return from the manager of every estate of the quantity of food distributed to them: and if a slave complained to the governor of ill-treatment, a police investigation was immediately instituted. Whether former abuses had led to this salutary regulation, or precaution projected by foresight, we did not learn; but complaints were of seldom occurrence, and it was generally understood that the negroes were well treated.

There was evidently a shade of superiority in their demeanour and attire, over those we had seen in the other islands: the former, if not precisely more sedate, was less vagrant and artificial; and the latter was more uniform and neat. Their houses were also better built, principally of stone, and regularly laid out; and some of them had their roofs shingled, which bespoke an improved condition over those at Tortola. Another important fiscal regulation was imposed: that of inculcating a proper regard to religious observances, by allotting a prescribed time for their attendance at places of worship; and much praise was bestowed, we believe justly, upon the Moravian Missionaries, who had been long encouraged in the Danish colo-

nies, for their pious and unaffected zeal in the cause of Christianity, and for inculcating among the negroes obedience to their superiors and good-will among themselves[1]. The Wesleyan Missionaries, on the other hand, from some singular prejudice, were not permitted to work their mission in the island, and if any of them landed for that purpose, they were required to depart within twenty-four

[1] "After many years of unsuccessful labour," says Mr. Edwards, "experience has taught them that the plain testimony concerning the death and passion of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, together with its cause and happy consequences, delivered by a Missionary, touched with an experimental sense of it, is the surest way of enlightening the benighted minds of the negroes, in order to lead them afterwards, step by step, into all truth. They, therefore, never make it a rule to enter into an extensive discussion of the doctrines of God's being an infinite spirit, of the Holy Trinity, &c. nor to seek to open their understandings in those points, until they believe in Jesus; and the Word of the Cross has proved itself the power of God unto salvation, by the true conversion of their hearts. Both in the beginning and progress of instruction, the Missionaries endeavour to deliver themselves as plainly and intelligibly to the faculty of their hearers as possible.

"As it is required of all believers that they prove their faith by their works, the brethren teach that no habit of sin, in any land or place, nor any prevailing custom whatever, can be admitted as a plea for a behaviour not conformable to the moral law of God given unto all mankind. Upon the fulfilment of this, the Missionaries insist every where; and the private behaviour of the negroes in their families, in every occurrence of life, must evidence a thorough change of heart and principles."

hours. This restriction, which at first sight appears arbitrary and impolitic, was, no doubt, projected by a laudable motive, to prevent jealousy between the two sects, or embarrassment in the minds of their untutored disciples, by any difference in their doctrines: superinduced probably on the one hand, by evidence of the exemplary conduct of the Moravians, and the successful results of their indefatigable industry and zeal in promoting moral and religious principles among the negroes: and on the other, by a breach on the part of the Wesleyans, of restrictions less rigid, as set forth in the reply of the Danish government to a petition presented by them in 1798. "As private individuals," says the reply, "or as ministers on a visit to the islands, the Methodist Missionaries were at liberty to preach occasionally as they had done before, but that no grant could be given, through which they might establish societies in any of the Danish territories."

The Moravians commenced their mission in these islands as early as 1732; and in 1787, the number of converted negroes under their care in Santa Cruz, Saint Thomas, and Saint John, was about 10,000.

At length the blessing of heaven descended upon the parched earth, and the planters rejoiced in their hearts, but the relief was partial and insufficient to satisfy the craving appetite of languishing vegetation. Within the tropics, man and beast, and vegetable, are wonderfully bibacious, and thirst is commonly the most insatiable desire of their constitutional habits. Except during the "rainy season," when the sky is overcast, and the earth becomes saturated with the overwhelming torrents which descend sometimes for days together, the vivid rays of a vertical sun soon exhale the moisture imparted to its bosom by the more placid and transitory showers which fall at other times, and they are frequently needed to support the vivifying principle of vegetation.

The sugar-cane is propagated from the top shoots, usually measuring about twelve inches, cut from the tops of the old canes, after the leaves or flags have been taken off during the period of harvest; they are afterwards removed from the field and placed in water for about twenty-four hours to assist the *budding*. If the land be not ready, or sufficiently moist to receive the plants, they are tied

in small bundles, placed perpendicularly, covered with trash or dried leaves of the cane, and watered two or three times a day to preserve them. During a period of drought, the plant cannot be committed to the earth with any hope of success, but as soon as the weather favours the process of planting, the bundles are conveyed to the piece of land prepared for them, and the young negroes distribute two or three plants in each cane-hole, whilst the more experienced lodge them about six inches under ground, placed horizontally, so that the buds may appear on either side. The canes thus propagated are called *plant-canes*, in contradistinction to those which are produced by sprouts from the roots of the canes that have been left in the ground, which are called *rattoons*, with the distinguishing appellation of *first*, *second*, *third*, and so on, according to the number of times they have been produced from the original plant. In case the young shoots do not appear above ground in a few weeks, the deficiences must be supplied with new plants.

The process of preparing the land for planting is the most laborious occupation of the negroes. They hoe it into squares of about four feet, the angles of

which are determined by sticks, placed by the young negroes, the parallel lines being first given by an ordinary surveying chain, or a string. As the banks are being formed in a parallel direction, ridges are left in a cross direction, to form the square hole, and in this state the piece of land is frequently planted with provisions, consisting of yams or sweet potatoes, on the banks and eddoes in the hollow[1] When these crops are gathered, the piece is again holed in a cross direction (called *cross-holeing*) the earth being drawn up on the ridges, and the hollow square made again perfect for the reception of the cane-plant: the land is then manured, and left to imbibe the dews and rains preparatory to planting. The height of the bank varies according to the nature and depth of the soil, the great object being the retention of moisture in the hole, to assist the budding and growth of the young plant. In hilly situations the

[1] The eddoes, of which there are three species, is a very wholesome root, not so large as the yam, but by many people preferred to it. It is frequently used in soups, and is an important ingredient in the pottage of the negroes, who also eat the young leaves and the spiral stalks which support the flower, as a sallad. The botanical name is *Arum Maximum Ægyptiacum*,

process of holeing is more laborious, and the regularity of the holes is frequently rendered impracticable by the interruption of stones, which are occasionally formed into rude walls for the purpose of retaining the earth on the acclivities, as we have noticed in the island of Tortola.

At the western extreme of the island, which by the way, is about twenty miles in length, there is another town called "*Frederickstadt*" or "*West End*," of infinitely less extent and importance than Christianstadt. It has a good roadstead for shipping within a circular bay, prettily planted with trees, and its appearance, especially from the sea, is very insinuative. Hither Jonathan resorts with his "brandy-wine, corn-meal," and lumber, in preference to *Basin*, where the anchorage is less secure, with an ugly entrance.

There was no resisting the benevolent designs of the liberal-minded upon our well-being; and every day was too short for the purposes of good fellowship. We were yesterday rusticating at West End, and feasting on dainties at *Sprat Hall;* to-day we reciprocate at *East-end* with a party of forty at Beh—g—ns; the like to-morrow at Montpellier,

with that prince of good fellows, Ch—b—t; the next day we pic-nic off his *rattoons;* perform the same ceremony with B——t, at Saint John's, on the two following; and finish the week with the painful conviction on our mind, that there are only twenty-four hours in a day, and that we required half a dozen stomachs at least, to have enabled us to do honour to the rejected invitations.

It is possible the reader may not know the meaning of a *rattoon* dinner. It consists of the surplus edibles of yesterday's banquet, brought within a smaller compass for fewer guests, and divested of much of the garniture and superfluities which often puzzle the comprehension and impede one's progress at a meal. After cutting the sugar-cane, it is again propagated by sprouts from the old stem, as well as by plants taken from the top part of the cane, as already described. The canes produced from the former are termed *rattoons*, and they often prove better, especially in *rich* soils, than the plant canes which are nurtured with greater care. In like manner, a *rattoon* dinner—the name must be obvious—is frequently made more agreeable by our tropical friends, than the more artificial display of the one

which preceded it; especially if a quadrille, sipping cold punch and syllabubs, and inhaling the flowery fragrance of maiden's sighs, form intervening links in the chain of enjoyments which connects yesterday with to-day, and brings thee again to the banquet board of thine host ere you depart his dwelling.

There is an indescribable something in the disposition of evening, which in every region is calculated to cast a melancholy shade over the human mind, unless counteracted by some repelling cause; and in the clear and ardent climate of the Tropics especially, where the shadows of twilight have scarce time to mingle with the rich and varied tints of vegetation, before the funereal pall of night closes upon its beauties, the soul seems to yield more readily to the pervading influence, as if conscious of the analogy it presents between the close of life and eternity. The contraction of the alimentary canals, immediately preceding the hour of dinner, may have something to do with it, and it was no indication of an idiosyncratic disposition on our part, for we found others, who had been long habituated to the climate, governed by the same power.

The houses in the town were so constructed, as

to require the ascent of a flight of stairs to gain admission to the dining or withdrawing room; but in the dwellings in the country, convenience and comfort appeared to have suggested, with very few exceptions, the expediency of having all the rooms on the ground-floor; the hall or first entrance, usually the largest apartment, serving as the dining-room, with a latticed corridor or gallery in front, shaded by a vine over-head. In this gallery, the weather permitting, the gentlemen usually assemble until dinner is announced; and on most occasions, we instinctively detected a reciprocal taciturnity among those who, with ourselves, had congregated to do honour to hospitality. Some would sit with their legs in an horizontal position, their feet placed on the latticed breast-work, with their bodies poised on the declined back of a chair, whilst they watched the last beams of the declining sun fading on the face of nature; others would hold desultory conversation on plantership or the ordinary occurrences of the community; but all, more or less—man has been compared to a machine—seemed to require winding-up, not so much for the purpose of *keeping* time, as to afford them a more agreeable method of

killing it. In the meanwhile, the sable domestics are busily engaged between the hall and the kitchen. The ladies seldom make their appearance until dinner is announced, and the united effect of *both* necessarily cause resuscitation of the drooping spirits of man. It is a transformation, which may be compared to that of the moth from the chrysalis, so lately buried within itself, now gladdened by the solar beams, and revelling in a new life. He covets the soul-inspiring presence of woman, as a meted potion of the *elixir-vitæ*, to give additional zest to "the feast of reason and the flow of soul," and his fresh fledged imagination flies from one end to the other of the festive board, till it becomes weary of experiments and sated by variety.

A West Indian dinner of the first order is certainly marvellously diaphoretic, notwithstanding the rooms are constructed so as to admit as much cool air as may be expedient or safe to encounter; but the unnecessary number of servants, and the steam of the viands, with the active respiration of twenty or thirty, and sometimes as many as forty persons composing the party at table, produce an effect upon the animal economy, which puts zephyrs and breezes at de-

fiance. Each guest brings a servant with him, and although *Quaco*, and *Rodney*, and *Primus*, and the whole host of them have acquired a tolerable notion of "high life below stairs," and consider it a species of perquisite as much as our English domestics do, yet an irresistible curiosity to see and hear what may be going on in the hall, maintains, for a time, an ascendancy over their other desires, until the *clearance* no longer affords them an *excuse* for their presence. A negro, in short, delights in display, and bustle, and noise; and whether it be a turn-out of the militia, or a wedding, or a dinner party, or a funeral, it matters not, if it carry him from the thoughts of his ordinary occupations, and cause him excitement for the moment: hence we see almost every guest at table with a servant behind him, whether required to attend or not; and the major-domo of the establishment finds it difficult to repress their officiousness in their attempts to be serviceable, or to exclude some of them from the room if necessary, which the predominance of a sudatory odour in the compound effluvia might occasionally render extremely desirable. About a dozen black faces are at the same time looking in

at the door or windows; and if a quadrille bring up the rear of the evening, the number of visitors in the vicinity of the dwelling inevitably increases, and a novice might conjecture that dancing had become epidemic, and that the whole black multitude on the estate, men, women, and children, had been inoculated for it by a *tarantula*. The sound of music seems to affect all ranks, grades, or distinctions among them. Nature appears to have endowed them from their infancy with singular acuteness in the perception of sounds, and their aptitude in catching an air, after hearing it once or twice, is very remarkable. It is, indeed, a striking characteristic even among savages of every region, as well as among those who may be advanced some grades nearer to civilized life, and it seems to argue that the organ of sounds becomes repressed as the mind expands, to adapt itself to the various occupations which a refined state of society imposes upon it. It is certain that a love of music is by no means so universal in that state, as it is known to be among a barbarous people; and few instances, we believe, can be adduced among the most eminent musical composers, of their possessing any

remarkable superiority of intellect. We are not, however, unmindful of the debt of gratitude we owe them all, for the exquisite *pleasure* which their compositions have afforded us:—

> "For, after all, 'tis but a *sensual* charm,
> Where much is felt and nothing understood;
> Music can sorrow soothe and care disarm,
> Tuning the heart into a happier mood,
> Can turn us from the thoughts of present harm,
> Can cheat us with the hope of future good,
> Can raise us to a height almost divine
> By its o'erpowering magic—so can *wine!*
>
> "If music be of th' intellect, then all
> That hits the soul by medium of the sense,—
> Repose, refection, things we sensual call,
> Are intellectual on the same pretence;
> They all o'ercome us with a pleasing thrall,
> Bid the soul revel in her own intents,
> But nought originate: to the human mind,
> Music ne'er gave one thought of any kind."

But we like the sensuality of the thing prodigiously.

The society of Santa Cruz comprised many respectable, well educated and intelligent persons, who were reconciled to living on their estates, in preference to anticipating their income in Europe upon the credit of mortgages, or possibly with the laudable motive of preventing foreclosure by a cir-

cumscribed expenditure. Several English were of the number, who had settled themselves on the island during the period it was under the dominion of the British crown.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

Santa Cruz is said to have been the spot where the Insulary Caribs first established themselves, and whence the other islands inhabited by that race were peopled. It was their *western* settlement when Columbus discovered it in his second voyage, and it was here that the first conflict took place between them and the Spaniards. They had cast anchor to procure water, and thirty men proceeded to the shore, where they found four dogs. "When they had tarried there two dayes," says Peter Martyr, in his epistle to Ascanius Sphorcia, "they sawe afarre off a *canoe*, in the which were eight men, and as manie women, having with them bowes and arrowes. They fiercely assailed our menne without all feare, and hurt some of them with their venemous arrowes. Among these there was a certaine woman, to whom the other gave reverence,

and obeyed as though shee were their queene. Her sonne wayted upon her, beeing a young man, strongly made, of terrible and frowning countenance, and a lion's face. Our menne, least they should take the more hurt by being wounded afarre off, thought it best to joyne with them. Therefore with all speed, setting forward with their ores the bragadine, in which they were set a lande, they overturned their *canoa* with great violence, which being overwhelmed, they notwithstanding, as well the women as the menne, swimming, cast their dartes at our menne thicke and threefold. At the length, gathering themselves upon a rocke covered with the water, they fought manfully until they were overcome and taken, one being slayne, and the queene's sonne sore wounded. When they were brought into the admiral's ship, they did no more put off their fierceness and cruel countenances, than do the lions of Lybia when they perceive themselves to bee bound in chaynes. There is no man able to behold them, but he shall feele his bowels grate with a certayne horrour, nature hath endued them with so terrible menacing and cruel aspect."

In a subsequent epistle, written after the Spaniards had established themselves at Porto Rico, he observes, "The canibales shall shortly repent them, and the blood of our men shall be revenged, and that the sooner because they came againe from their owne ilande of Sancta Crux (otherwise called *Ay Ay)* to the ilande of *Sancti Johannis*, and slue a king, which was a friende to our menne, and eate him, and al his familie, utterly subverting his village, upon this occasion, that violating the law of hostage, hee hadde slayne seven canibales, which were left with him by composition to make certayne canoas, because the ilande of Santi Johannis beareth greater trees, and apter for that purpose, then doth the Iland of Sancti Crux, the chiefe habitation of the canibales. Our men, fearing their venemous arrowes, (for they were not prepared to fight,) gave them signes of peace. Being demanded why they destroyed the village, and where the King was with his familie, they answered, that they rased the village, and cut the King with his familie in peeces, and eate them in the revenge of their seven workmen: and that they had made faggottes of their bones, to carry them to

the wives and children of their slayne workmen, in witnesse that the bodies of their husbands and parents lay not unrevenged, and therewith shewed the faggottes of bones to our men, who being astonished at their fiercenesse and crueltie, were enforced to dissemble the matter, and holde their peace, quarrelling no further with them at that time."

Sir Walter Raleigh's fleet touched here in 1587, on its way to settle a colony in Virginia, at which time the island appeared uninhabited. "Some of our women and men," says an account of their visit, "by eating a small fruit like greene apples, were fearefully troubled with a sudden burning in their mouths, and swelling of their tongues so bigge that some of them could not speake. Also, a childe by sucking one of those women's breasts, had at that instant his mouth set in such a burning, that it was strange to see how the infant was tormented for the time: but after twenty-four hours, it wore away of itselfe [1]." This fruit, no doubt, was the Manchineel apple.

In 1625, the Dutch and English jointly took possession of the island, but it does not appear that

[1] Hakluyt, vol. iii. page 341.

they established themselves upon it, for in 1643, the Dutch sent a colony from Saint Eustatia, and they were expelled by the English in 1646. In 1650, the English were in turn attacked by the Spaniards, who landed 1200 men in the night, and massacred indiscriminately men, women, and children, and laid the island waste. The few that escaped into the woods were compelled to quit the island. In the same year the Dutch again attempted a settlement, and met with a similar fate; and the French landed from two vessels at different points a short time after. Only three or four of those that landed from one vessel, escaped with their lives, the others acted on the offensive, and invested the Spanish fort, which capitulated. Three hundred French colonists were immediately sent to the island to settle it. At this time the country was so crowded with old trees, that a free circulation of air was prevented; and to remedy the inconvenience with as little delay as possible, the French set fire to the woods, and from their vessels watched its progress: it burnt for months; they landed again as soon as they could do so with safety.

Hence we perceive that upwards of a century and a half had elapsed after the discovery of the island, before any permanent settlement was made upon it by Europeans. In that time what a picture is presented to the imagination! a picture which exhibits in a diminutive compass an epitome of the lawless warfare, and wanton sacrifice of life, of miseries and crimes, which attended, in almost every instance, the settling of the other islands of the Archipelago. The aboriginal inhabitants had become familiar with the white man, whom they first viewed as a being from heaven, only to curse with their latest breath the triumph of his refined barbarity over the natural impulses of their savage and untutored nature. They were swept from the face of the earth by a system of warfare the most relentless and exterminating that the ingenuity of *civilized* man could project; and we behold the spot where they and their progenitors had, for a period unrecorded in the history of ages, lived through days and years of ignorant content—where nature supplied their simple wants in bountiful profusion, now without a voice to awaken echo in the woods! Such is the effect in the

middle distance of the picture: nearer the foreground we behold the same sanguinary spirit in competition for the possession of the prize, and the firebrand defacing the fair face of nature, as a prelude to the tribute to be exacted from her by the conqueror.

It is true the Caribs were a ferocious and untractable race, whom no laws could govern save those of instinct, and with whom no faith could be held; but we believe their character has been painted in the worst colours, to justify or excuse the atrocities which were exercised towards them, and especially by the Spaniards, whose wanton and unrelenting cruelty towards the more harmless and simple-hearted natives of Hispaniola, and the other islands to the westward, could admit of no extenuation. Peter Martyr has given a pleasing picture of the simplicity and contentment of these people: a race totally distinct in habits and language from the Caribs. "It is certain," says he, "that the land among these people is as common as the sun and water, and that 'mine and thine,' the seeds of all mischief, have no place with them. They are content with so little, that in so large a country

they have rather superfluity than scarceness; so that they seem to live in the golden world, without toil, living in open gardens, not entrenched with dykes, divided with hedges, or defended with walls. They deal truly one with another, without laws, without books, and without judges. They take him for an evil and mischievous man, who taketh pleasure in doing hurt to another, and albeit they delight not in superfluities, yet they make provision for the increase of such roots whereof they make their bread, contented with such simple diet, whereby health is preserved and disease avoided." This was

> ———" the harmony of times,
> Before the winds blew Europe o'er these climes;
> True, they had vices—such are nature's growth—
> But only the Barbarian's—we have both."

The French settlers at Santa Cruz, were doomed to meet with many reverses: their number had increased in ten years to only 600, besides slaves; and in 1695, they were reduced to only 147 men, besides women and children, and 623 negroes, all of whom were removed in that year to San Domingo, by an order from the French government,

accompanied with instructions to burn all the houses, to spoil the harbour, and if any of the inhabitants refused to embark, force was to be used to compel them.

Nevertheless, the right of sovereignty over the island appears to have continued undisputed in the French crown until 1733, when the government sold it to the Danes for 75,000*l.*

From this period the colonists were prosperous in their undertakings, subjected, however, to those awful visitations of Providence, which too frequently bring devastation and ruin with them, and from which none of the West Indian Islands are wholly exempt. In the hurricane of 1772, which laid waste most of the other islands in these seas, no less than 460 houses in Christianstadt, and all the houses in Frederickstadt excepting three, were destroyed, besides magazines and stores. The sea rose seventy feet above its usual height, carrying every thing before it, and every ship at the anchorage was driven on shore. Three years before, ten estates were destroyed by fire, by which a loss was sustained, amounting to 250,000*l.* and during four years ending in 1791, a continuance of severe

drought caused the greatest distress, and many of the negroes died in consequence.

In 1801, the island, as well as Saint Thomas's and Saint John's, capitulated to the British forces under Admiral Duckworth and General Trigg, but it was restored in the following year; and in 1807, it again surrendered to the English, under Admiral Cochrane and General Bowyer, continuing under the dominion of the British crown until 1815, when it was restored to the Danes.

CHAPTER XVII.

TRADE WINDS AND CALMS—REMONSTRANCE OF THE FOWLS—DISPATCH COCKS—SABA—SAINT CHRISTOPHER'S—BRYAN AND PEREENE—BASSETERRE—CURIOSITY, AN ENDEMIC—A CHARACTER—MISS POLLY—A WOODEN BOWL VERSUS A LIVERPOOL BASIN—AN OLD BACHELOR—A FISH DINNER—MAINTENON CUTLETS—FUN.

"Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath fram'd strange fellows in her time."
Merchant of Venice.

THE passage-boat conveyed us back to Saint Thomas, after a sojourn of several weeks in Santa Cruz, which were made as short and agreeable as a spirit of emulation among several of the inhabitants to gratify our curiosity, and to contribute to our comfort, could well effect.

We embarked in a mail-boat for the island of Saint Christopher, leaving the harbour of Saint Thomas in the evening, and on the following

morning we were again in the Road-town at Tortola.

The constant prevalence of the north-easterly, or trade wind, except at short intervals during those months which bear the prenomen of "hurricane," when Æolus now and then grants a roving commission to his tributary gods, and *Eurus*, and *Boreas*, and *Notus*, and *Zephyrus*, become ambitious of distinction in kicking up a disturbance in concert, renders the navigation to the eastward or to windward extremely irksome; and by frequent tacking, more "wear and tear," as the sailors call it, is produced about the rigging and hull of a vessel, than would be effected in a voyage round the world with fair winds. The frequent intervention of calms, too, leaves the vessel to the influence of a weather current, which imperceptibly gives her a retrograde motion, while the scorching rays of a tropical sun draw the pitch, and open the seams of her decks and sides, and render one's presence on deck almost intolerable. It was thus we were situated the day after we left Tortola, having made but little progress to windward during the night. The whole sensible horizon lay mirrored around

us, the monotonous outline broken only by a few birds, occasionally seen skimming on the surface after prey, or a floating turtle, or the back fin or tail of a shark prowling beneath it. The islands of *Santa Cruz*, *Saint Thomas*, *Tortola* and its numerous dependencies, the desolate looking rock of *Saba*, the conical mountain of *Saint Eustatia*, and the irregular hillocks of *Saint Martin* and *Saint Bartholomew*, whose connected bases were beneath the horizon's verge, lay in different directions and in different shades around us.

The cabin of the vessel was too small to admit of our standing upright with comfort, and we were obliged to assume a recumbent posture in our sleeping berths, with a book to feed our minds and frequent libations of bottled porter to satisfy our constant thirst, until a breeze should come to make the atmosphere bearable, or the sun should depart from the horizon.

The few fowls that had been put on board were huddled together in one corner of the hen-coop which afforded the most shade, and they frequently manifested uneasiness from the heat, by endeavouring to get under each other for

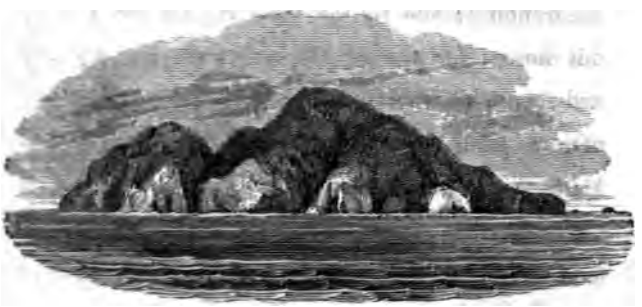
shelter, which was no sooner effected by one, than the other above it followed its example by taking its place, thus causing a rupture, which produced cackling complaints among themselves, and certain impressive terms of reproach and exhortation from *Sam* the black cook, who was engaged in his culinary arrangements at the *capuch*, and seemed unwilling to be interrupted in whistling a tune as an accompaniment. "Hole yu tung, you fool, warra fu you mek dat noise?—you tink him warm, eh?—how you like de hot water, fu boil you?" Regardless of the significant inquiry of master Sam, they still persisted in their efforts to make themselves as cool and cozy as possible, even at the expence of being well pecked by each other in struggling for the mastery; and their loquacity continued to our infinite amusement, in concert with the cook's admonitory discourse, alternating with the shrill modulations of his music. "You no hole you tung, eh?—you young debbil, I good mine flog you all roun, mek you tender,—mek you good fu soup." And having at length approached the coop to harangue them severally, and pass sentence upon them in rotation, he selected one from the number,

whose screams might have satisfied us that it was about paying the penalty of its life, without the supplementary intimation from the executioner that he would "soon top he mout."

Another hour gave us some excellent soup, composed of the limbs of the martyred bird, thickened with potatoes and onions, and green peppers, with other ingredients, which proved Sam a tolerable proficient in the science of nautical gastronomy; and by the time Apollo had put up his horses for the night, others of the feathered tribe were before us in the form of "*dispatch cocks.*" These said dispatch *cocks*, which, by the by, partake of both genders, are simply fowls cut down the back, and expanded to the purposes of a *grill;* and being well peppered and buttered, with a sprinkle of lime juice, or other condiments *ad libitum*, they afford an agreeable relief to an appetite that demands *haste* to be gratified—whence the name.

The evening was delightfully cool, and we sat on the deck at our repast, enjoying the fragrance of a cigar, and the refreshing light airs which began to play on the surface of the water, and to glide the vessel quietly on her course.

The small rocky island of *Saba* lay at no great distance from us on the right, rising abruptly from the sea, as if ambitious of that distinction which the reputed independence, and ease, and contentment of its inhabitants might justly claim for it: and in the clear serenity of the evening, the blandness and purity of the atmosphere, we seemed to partake of the halo of permanent harmony and repose which surrounded it.



SABA.

The extremes bearing from S. W. to W. S. W. about 3 miles distant.

The aspect of the island from the sea presents no palpable signs of its being inhabited, the coast rising in perpendicular masses to a considerable height, representing at a distance a steep round rock; and it is totally inaccessible, excepting on the south side, where an intricate artificial path admits in its ascent

only one person at a time. A small town lies in this direction, built in a secluded valley. The extent of the island does not exceed nine miles in circumference, and the small portion of it that is cultivable is appropriated to the growth of cotton, which the inhabitants work into stockings for sale, as well as for their own use. Vegetables are also reared to great perfection, and the growth of cabbages to an extraordinary size might alone evince the genial temperature of the atmosphere, if it were not more clearly evident from the purity of blood and freshness of complexion which characterize the natives. They compose a population of about 1500, living in a state of unambitious simplicity, the ordinary speculations of their minds seldom extending beyond the confines of their sea-girt citadel.

"Happy colony!" says the Abbé Raynal, "elevated on the top of a rock between the sky and sea, it enjoys the benefit of both elements without dreading their storms; it breathes a pure air, lives upon vegetables, cultivates a simple commodity, from which it derives ease without the temptation of riches; is employed in labours less troublesome than useful, and possesses in peace all the blessings

of moderation, health, beauty, and liberty. This is the temple of peace, from whence the philosopher may contemplate at leisure the errors and passions of men. Hence may he view at a distance the nations of Europe bearing thunder in the midst of the ocean, and burning with the flames of ambition and avarice under the heats of the tropics; devouring gold without ever being satisfied; wading through seas of blood to amass those metals, those pearls, those diamonds, which are used to adorn the oppressors of mankind; loading innumerable ships with those precious casks which furnish luxury with purple, and from which flow pleasures, effeminacy, cruelty, and debauchery. The tranquil inhabitant of Saba views this mass of follies, and spins his cotton in peace."

Mem. The worthy Abbé is usually more remarkable for hyperbolical extravagance in his relations, than for correctness either in his descriptions, his authorities, or his dates.

During the night the light airs combined with increasing strength to carry us far on our voyage, and on the following morning we were close to the island of *Saint Eustatia.* It was our desire to land

here, but the mail-boat had no business among the *Dutch*, so we visited it prospectively in our mind's eye, when a future opportunity should present itself, and on the morning of the fourth day after quitting Tortola, we anchored in the bay of Basseterre at Saint Christopher.

The anchorage is an open roadstead with a never ceasing surf on the beach, and when the wind blows strong, especially from the southward or eastward, it breaks with terrific disorder on the coast. Many adventurous boatmen have found a watery grave on the spot, and given their bodies to the sharks which prowl about the bay, as if prescient of their prey.

Dr. Grainger wrote a ballad *muy doloroso*, commemorating the calamitous fate of two lovers on the beach of Basseterre. *Bryan* had just arrived from England, and beheld from the vessel's deck his fair inamorata anxiously waiting his landing.

> "The north-east wind did swiftly blow,
>
> * * * *
>
> Young Bryan thought the boat's crew slow,
> And so jump'd overboard."

As he was about making the beach he was seized

by a monstrous shark, which severed him in two, and the distracted maiden could not survive his untimely end. Oh, this love, this love!

One side of the town of Basseterre faces the sea, formed chiefly of wooden houses, built without the least regard to uniformity; and their sombre appearance, with very few exceptions, from want of paint, and exposure to the sun and weather, and the additional obscurity of their forms caused by the intervention of tall *cocos* which range in front, might encourage rather an unprepossessing opinion of the place as it is seen from the anchorage, if the verdant and beautifully formed hills in the back-ground, the precipitous mountains which tower above them, densely clothed with luxuriant vegetation, and the rich varied tints of the cultivated acclivities, did not redeem its character by producing such an exhilarating effect upon the senses of the beholder, as to serve as an irresistible invitation for him to land.

The towering pinnacle of Mount Misery is seldom unobscured by clouds which congregate at its base and along the ridges of the subjacent mountains, casting with their shadows deeper hues over the forest wilds, and affording a stronger contrast

to the more vivid colouring of the chequered cane-fields which lie beneath.

That part of the beach to which a boat conveyed us was crowded with negroes and a few white and coloured people; and if we had been an elephant or a nondescript, we could not have excited to all appearance greater interest in the beholders. The most interested of the party were doubtless the first named class of persons, each eager to assist the boat through the surf, and to give us a dry landing, by taking us bodily out of the boat and placing us on our legs beyond the reach of the turbulent element; and had we been as bulky as the animal we have named, we should have found assistants enough to have "lent a hand" unasked, that each of them might have claimed a gratuity for his *trouble*. We were precisely in the situation of a choice carcase before a party of cannibals, one of whom selected a leg, its fellow was the next moment in possession of another, a third seized an arm, a scramble followed among the rest for a share of the remnants, till our head became lost to us from the stupifying sensations produced by the foaming of waters, the hubbub of voices,

and the sudden and unexpected assault upon our physical independence, as we were standing up in the boat in the act of exercising it. Our legs were the first members of our body that recovered their faculties, as if intended by nature to impart to our other organs the senses assigned to them; but the voluble balderdash which now assailed our ears from the mouths of about a dozen negroes, might have caused fresh apprehension that the ordeal we had gone through, had been that of being *black*-balled[1] out of civilized life, and that we were receiving a deputation of savages to congratulate us upon our arrival among them. "Tan away you, lebe de genelman alon," exclaimed a sagacious looking black Agonistes, conscious of his superior strength, as he caused a movement in the group by a sudden push with his shoulder against the nearest by-stander, "you no do notin, you know dat, you d—n nigger you, tan away; Massa, me lan you dry." He was here interrupted by a clamorous reiteration of his last words by the whole party, each anxious to establish a claim, whilst some exhibited

[1] Query *bawled.*—Printer's devil.

singular gesticulations of contempt, as they measured with their eyes the height and assumed importance of him who had attempted to take all the credit to himself. "Warra fu you push," said one of them, "warra fu you call me nigger—you no nigger, eh? you gu for notin—pick up lang shore coramanty black debbil."—"Berry well, tan you clear," rejoined Sampson; "bly dog buy trouble, hunded pown chaun cleary he,"[1] an axiom which had an astounding effect in appeasing the wrath of the belligerents.

While this scene was passing we broke through the group, leaving our servant, a shrewd clever negro we had brought from Tortola, to settle with him or them whose claim might appear most tenable, or whose pertinacity might cause him to yield to the demand. In the latter case, however, John would have better surety.

Several small groups of white and coloured persons stood in detached positions in front of the different houses, where their occupations at their stores, or in attending to the shipping of sugar or

[1] "A black dog, (a copper coin of the value of three half pence) buys trouble, but a hundred pounds can't clear you of it."

the landing of merchandize, had required their presence, whilst their curiosity—an endemic of the country—directed their attention for a time to the arrival. Others were seen at the different windows; and at the landing-place of a flight of wooden steps which ascended to the first floor of a huge unseemly building, which bore on the front the significant designation of an "hotel," there was sufficient number of persons to indicate that its inmates were gregarious. The dimensions of this building had a more formidable appearance, from its standing at the corner of a street which led into the heart of the town, whence two of its sides were seen in perspective, and its numerous open windows, and the weather-beaten aspect of its outward materials, gave it the semblance of an old three-decker that had been stranded on the beach, or laid up in ordinary. In proceeding thither, we stopped for a few minutes while the captain of the mail-boat satisfied the inquiries of an old gentleman who had the surveillance of a few negroes employed unloading a boat. His age might have been between fifty and sixty, and the expression of his countenance indicated that experience in the world had given to

the operations of his mind all the varied inflections of a practised sagacity. He wore a large rimmed straw-hat which partially shaded his face, and peering from beneath it as he spoke, his small grey eyes, which were shrouded by bushy eye-brows, sparkled with calculating intelligence, as he cast them at one moment to the work the negroes were engaged in, and at the next to the anticipated result of his inquiries. His small mouth, which had acquired the expression of age from the loss of teeth, and the consequent compression which brought his chin into nearer contact with a large rounded nose, seemed active in co-operating with the other features of his face, as they produced conjointly indication of pleasure or disappointment. His height was rather above the ordinary standard, and that portion of it which was lost by an habitual stoop, was counteracted in effect by the meagre and attenuated proportions of his limbs. A thin cambric cravat, which shewed the forms of a pad it enclosed, was tied round his lengthy neck, and by concealing the shirt collar seemed to define with greater exactness the lower outline of his small round face, whose compound expression, even at

times when lighted up by pleasurable emotions, irresistibly betrayed an irritability of temper which had kept in subjection a natural tendency to corpulency, and confined it entirely to the region of the abdomen.

He wore a coat which had been once black, but which had acquired a russet hue from exposure to the sun and long use, and the seams, from the same cause, bore the appearance of half obliterated chalk-lines. The sleeves were short enough to permit his wrists to advance about three inches beyond the cuffs, so as to exhibit a portion of his shirt sleeves, with narrow wristbands fastened tightly round his bony wrists with a pair of old-fashioned gold studds. His white waistcoat hung loose about his neck and chest, but the lower part of it expanded to his abdominous proportions, and reached within a few inches of the waistband of a tight pair of nankeen small-clothes, which, in the absence of a pair of braces, demanded occasionally a slight jerk from the wearer to keep them in their position: a portion of the shirt necessarily intervened between the two garments, forced into projecting plaits by their compression. Cotton stockings clothed a pair of

thin legs, and his shoes were cut in slashes at the sides to afford ease to his corns.

Having apparently satisfied his inquiries, he approached us with the air of an acquaintance who already knew the purport of our visit—he welcomed us to the island, offered his services, said a few common-place nothings in so hurried a manner that scarcely admitted of a reply, and finally asked us to take fish at *three;* adding, as he moved towards the beach to direct the negroes in their work—"nothing else—Captain's coming—wait for nobody—mind, at three—damn—damn lazy rascals—nothing doing."

In our way to the tavern we learnt that this singular personage was the most opulent merchant in the island—that he acted as the town agent for several estates in the country—was a great politician, and, like Sir Robert Bramble, would never be contradicted; he knew every body and every thing connected with the colony—discounted bills—and enjoyed every day the *otium cum dignitate* after his own fashion, in treating his guests to the finest fish out of the market.

The room we entered at the tavern, to which

we ascended by the steps already noticed, was large and uncouth in its construction, the unpainted rafters of the ceiling yielding to the superincumbent weight of the upper stories, and the flooring in several places showing indication of decay and a deviation from the horizontal line. In the centre was a billiard-table of the ordinary size, but it occupied but a small portion of the extensive area, which was otherwise furnished with two or three sideboards, an old-fashioned sofa or two, and the common cherry-tree chairs. Several persons were engaged at the game of billiards, occasionally imbibing a long draught of sangaree, or cold negus, from a huge tumbler, that contained about two quarts; two or three bed-rooms entered from this apartment, and at the further end was a communication to a shop, also kept by the landlady, *Miss* Polly Armatrading, or *Army-trading*, a transformation of the *patronymic*, occasioned by the extensive patronage herself and her numerous *daughters* had enjoyed from the disciples of Mars.

Anxious to proceed into the country to a distant estate, we repaired to the residence of the merchant to decline his invitation, but we readily accepted

his offer to procure us horses for the journey. We were, however, detained in town by one of those frequent and sudden falls of rain so common in the tropics, which descended at the moment we were taking our departure, and thus superinduced to partake of his piscatory diet, we followed the old gentleman up-stairs, where we found two or three persons already assembled for the proffered repast.

The dwelling was situated at the corner of a street, and the room we entered, which was about eighteen feet in length by twelve in breadth, was constructed in a manner which appeared common in the erection of wooden buildings in this part of the world, from the small square one-roomed hovels of the indigent, to the more capacious dwellings of the aristocracy. Two orders of tropical architecture were however blended in the dwelling of our host, the lower story or ground-floor, which served as a store or receptacle of merchandize, being built of stone, and a wooden frame-work planked outside with a shingled span roof, formed the upper apartment, the interior of which might serve to represent the halls (as they are termed,)

or dining-rooms, in most of the West Indian dwellings we had yet seen. This room had the advantage of a view from windows on three sides of it, its area defining the limits of this part of the occupant's premises, which consisted of several detached buildings. The windows were composed of Jallousies or Venetian blinds, which opened and closed after the manner of shutters, and when closed, as they were at present on one side, on account of the prevailing rain, objects outside could be distinctly seen through them. There was nothing about the habitation to denote the opulence of the owner—a sideboard stood at one end of the room, on which were placed a pair of large glass candle-shades, a sangaree glass of capacious size, and other glass ware—a few articles of plate, and a punch-bowl, placed exactly in the middle, with its base turned upwards, and a silver ladle with a twisted whalebone handle placed across it in due form, and with precise attention to the parallel. At the opposite end of the room, in one corner, stood a mahogany table, the whole surface covered with numerous papers, arranged in distinct parcels, all at equidistance from and parallel with each other, and on

them were placed either a stone, the bottom of a broken drinking-glass, or a piece of lead, to prevent them being disturbed or blown away by a current of wind. Some cherry-tree chairs, which are in common use in most of the dwellings, were ranged round the room, and in the middle of it was a table covered with a coarse dinner cloth, laid in a plain manner, for about ten persons. The plates were turned face downward, and with the utmost exactness in the distance from each other, and the knives and forks, whose fashion was rather out of date, were placed with corresponding uniformity on either side of them. Between every second plate was a red or green capsicum, and the moiety of a lime placed alternately; and two large silver spoons at each corner of the table, defined with the greatest exactness in distance the prescribed position of the salt. We had no sooner entered the room than we heard a shrill female voice, calling aloud for *Rodney*, and we shall never forget the singular idiom, and long-drawn terminations which were unmercifully interwoven with our vernacular tongue. From the tenor of the requisition, and the authoritative air that accompanied it, we judged Rodney

to be a domestic on the establishment.—"Rodnēy—where you are, Rodney—heh gad, you really too bad."—"Here, Mā'ām,"—replied a voice, which we prejudged to be that of a negro. "Come here you, I wārn't you," rejoined the *fair* requisitionist; and then adding, in a discontented drawl, "What for you bring me de wooden bōwl for wash my hārns? you know I no like de wooden bōwl—I like de blue bāsin dat cum fra Libber-p-ō-o-l."—We could hear our host muttering to himself, as he paced in short hurried steps about the room; and the only words which came intelligibly to our ears were, "D—n! d—n wooden bowl—basin—nonsense—forget the fish"—and in a louder tone, as he opened one of the jallousies which looked into a back-yard—"Come here, you black tatterdemalion." Master Rodney was not very prompt in his attendance; and when he appeared, after another summons or two, he shewed evident signs of habitual indifference to the demands of his master: and he cast a look at us as if to discover a reciprocal emotion of merriment, to that which he could only effectually conceal within himself when under the menacing look of his superior. He was clad in a

coarse duck shirt and trowsers, without either shoes or stockings. The demands of "Miss Betsey" served as an excuse for his tardiness, and a satisfactory recital of the names of the fish he had procured, caused his speedy dismissal, with directions to "look sharp with dinner."

The old gentleman continued to pace, or rather to move about the room, in that desultory manner which indicates a restless and irritable mind, driven from every object on which it might permanently settle, and obliged to seek relief in trifles. Every sound of a horse's feet, or a voice in the street, brought him to the jallousie, and elicited from him some such remark as, "Young demi-devil—fall down—break the horse's knees—tell your master—a negro can't lead a horse—must ride—must gallop—fine rain—do good—canes burnt,"—all of which was muttered to himself, and seemed rather to represent the detonating of certain animal fluids within him in a state of ebullition, his mouth acting as a safety-valve, than intended as an appeal, or to convey information, to those persons who might hear him. The uniformity we had observed in the position of several articles, was the work of his

hands; and as he conversed with us he continued to move about and to gratify, apparently unconsciously, the suggestions of an eye long accustomed to minuteness in order and arrangement. He had evidently been at work in arranging the plates before our arrival, but he continued to measure with his eye their distance from each other, and to adjust their position, by bringing their rims in exact correspondence with the edge of the table, and the knives and forks, and other articles, were no less objects of his scrutiny; and even a chair claimed his attention, if heedlessly left out of the position assigned to it. The party increased as the hour of dinner approached; but the table had been laid for "supernumerary members," as our host designated those who might "drop in" uninvited. "The Colonel's in town," said he, "saw him at Sharry's—buying a horse—here presently—wait for nobody"—adding, as the clock struck three, "Where's that lazy vagabond? Here, Rodney, bring fish!"

A supplementary dish or two might have occasioned some little delay in "serving-up" to the moment; but, notwithstanding repeated impreca-

tions on his African origin, and on the vice of idleness, Master Rodney allowed at least half an hour to elapse, before he made his appearance with the introductory decoction called *soup*, followed by a sleek black wench, who bore in each hand a fractional portion of the whole course, which was speedily completed, and we took our seats, as soon as our host had circumambulated the table and adjusted the position of every dish.

The party was composed chiefly of persons who controlled estates in the country, and whose attendance in town was occasionally required, notwithstanding our host acted as their "town-agent;" an office usually combined with that of the merchant, for the more ready procurement of such articles of plantation consumption, as might be required in the absence of a supply from England. His house was consequently their rendezvous; and a near-sighted policy had probably suggested to him the provision of a knife and fork for their accommodation.

The bubble reputation often floats on a shallow surface; and if a man be secure in bare independence, or can manage to make the world believe he possesses it, there is no surer means of acquiring

credit for having great wealth, than that of professing to be extremely poor:—

> ——————" All live by seeming.—
> The beggar begs with it, and the gay courtier
> Gains land and title, rank and rule, by seeming;
> The clergy scorn it not, and the bold soldier,
> Will eke with it his service. All admit it,
> All practise it; and he who is content
> With showing what he is, shall have small credit
> In church, or camp, or state,—so wags the world."

The fire-proof portion of our host's residence had great store of doubloons—so fame reported, and all believed it; but even a liberal discount could not remove difficulties to his satisfying paper credit, and he often declared himself without a dollar "to buy fish."

The confabulatory portion of the repast was in every way colonial, appertaining to crops and prices, droughts and washes, partnership and legislation, liberally flavored with a spice of scandal; and although our host showed signs of uneasiness, by muttering occasionally, "D—n, d—n, sink the shop," and by introducing a few forty years' old reminiscences, he so far relished the condiment of detraction as to join in the interlocutory judgment against the absent; as a bystander might make a

blow at a ball in behalf of a player who could not reach it, in order to keep up the spirit of the game.

"A—— is doing wonders with the plough," observed one, "we shall soon have Mount Misery furrowed into cane-holes, and cultivation carried on in the crater."

"Yes, when he succeeds in dispensing with the hoe, the negroes may sit in the shade, and convert their staffs into tooth-picks; he has prepared a ten-acre piece entirely with the plough, as if he was going to plant wheat in it, and the plan he has in embryo for exterminating the *knot-grass*, will entitle him to a gold medal, and the security of a patent for life."

"Well, well, we shall see," rejoined the other, "he may, perhaps, understand plantership better than dissecting a '*Maintenon cutlet.*' He dined with the Colonel the other day, and was as much puzzled over a mutton-chop, as if he had been solving a problem in Euclid."

An explanation was demanded.

"Why, the cutlets merited approval, and he joined in commendation, but with a saving clause—'I like them very well,' said he, 'excepting the

crackling,'—in the simplicity of his heart, he had swallowed the paper wrappers."

Speech was, for a few moments, paralyzed by obstreperous laughter, our host alone manifesting in silence the convulsion of merriment, by the shaking of his whole frame, which seemed to require the support of both hands, placed in a parallel position on the table, with knife and fork erect, whilst his eyes glistened, and his pursed mouth relaxed into a smile, as the index of inward pleasure.

"But I was going to tell you," resumed the communicant, "that he was equally at fault with the wine-coolers: the Colonel, perceiving that the one assigned to him was empty, desired the servant to place some water in it. 'I've just filled it, Sir,' said he. 'Yes,' added A——, 'I'll not take any more, I thank you: I've finished two of them already.'"

It appeared that Mr. A—— had recently arrived from England, to undertake the management of some estates; and that his experimental philosophy was at variance with the theory, the practice, and the opinions, which had been left as a sort of heirloom to the colony by the last generation of planters.

Let us do justice to "the fish," which was excellent *per se*, and marvellously enhanced by the association of divers dishes of curry and rice, a larded capon and ham, some turtle steaks, and sundry expletives, all of which were comprehended under the piscatory appellation, not even excepting certain condiments and conserves, and an admirable compound of rum and brandy, and limes, and sugar, and spice, which our host designated "*fun*," a word, as he assured us, which signified "*fish*" in Latin.

The elixir was mixed by himself in a large tumbler, and he manifested profound regard to the proportions required to effect a proper equivalence in the ingredients, by measuring them with the most scrupulous exactness, *secundum artem*, and accompanying the operation with certain ejaculatory expressions of satisfaction, until the work was completed, when holding up the vessel to a level with his eye, he gave a smack with his mouth, which bespoke anticipatory relish, and proceeded to distribute the mixture to his guests in wine glasses. He had advocated military discipline with great pertinacity during dinner, in the course of recounting his exploits in the memorable attack

upon the island by the French, under the Count de Grasse, in 1782, and he now indicated a desire that we should give a practical illustration of his theory, by conveying to our lips and swallowing the proffered dram, in the order of making ready, presenting, and firing, all at the same time. His small grey eyes sparkled with ineffable delight as he cast a speculative look round the table; and satisfied of a reciprocal feeling among his guests, he raised the glass to his mouth, as he exclaimed—"Well, here's to our *cordial* friends, and ——" a knock on the table with the knuckles of his left hand, and an intelligent wink, concluded the ceremony.

The party separated soon after dinner, our host being an early riser, after ten hours' sound sleep—and we returned to the tavern to try the experiment upon ourselves.

END OF VOL. I.

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